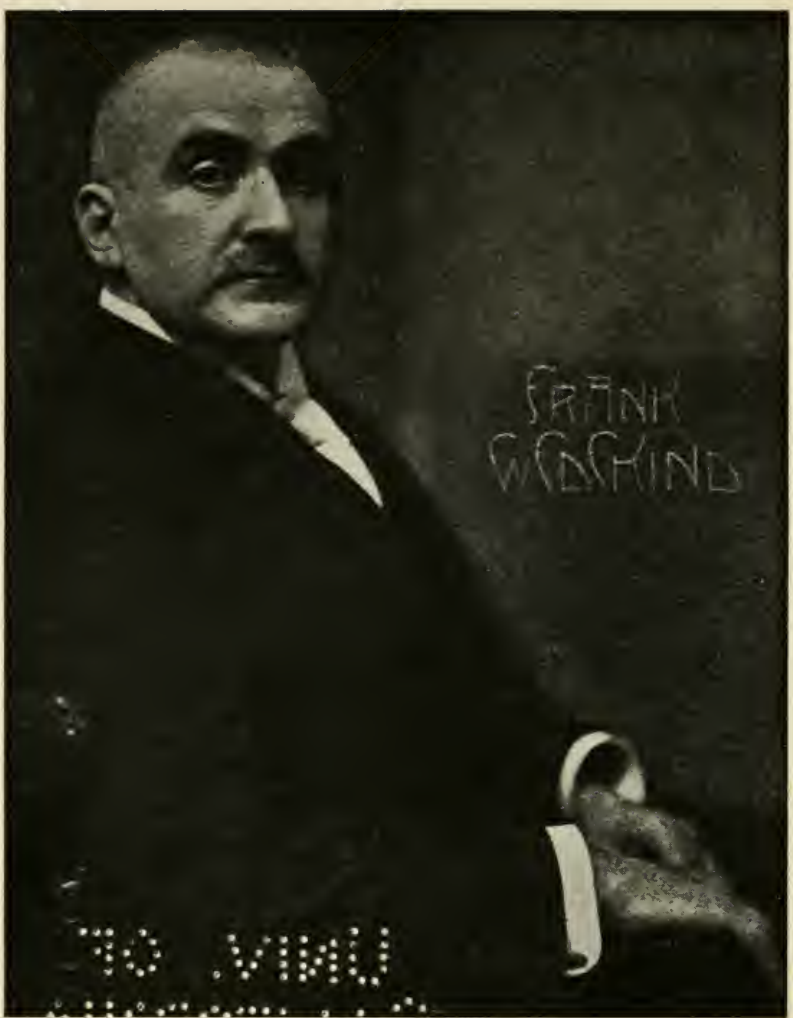

FRANK WEDEKIND

Princess Russalka

By FRANK WEDEKIND

Translated by
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FRANK WEDEKIND

"The playwrights whom I choose to emphasize as most expressive of the modern German theatre — the theatre in which Sudermann and Hauptmann are no longer paramount figures — are such men as Frank Wedekind, Ludwig Thoma, Hugo von Hoffmansthal, Arthur Schnitzler and Hermann Bahr. Very slowly have these names penetrated to English intelligences; yet it is in their work that we may find that which is today drawing the attention of the rest of the world to the German theatre."

It was in this fashion that the late Percival Pollard introduced the readers of his now famous book, "Masks and Minstrels of New Germany,"* to the author of the stories contained in this volume. From the nature of the book he then had in hand, Mr. Pollard's fine critical judgment was devoted al-

*"Masks and Minstrels of New Germany," by Percival Pollard. John W. Luce & Company, Boston, 1911.

most exclusively to Wedekind's dramatic productions. His references to the short stories and poetry being merely incidental, but brief as they are, quite sufficient to rouse the curiosity of those who are interested in the extraordinary personality of the man, and of those students of the drama who seek for the sources from which his plays have been finally evolved.

At least two features of importance will strike the reader of this volume. First, that even in his early work, Wedekind was not only impressed with the necessity of imparting a knowledge of the functions of sex to the young, but set himself seriously to the task of overcoming the popular prejudice against such education, by the only means he then had at command, the short story. Second, Wedekind's theory of the existence of a spirit of the flesh quite distinct from the soul, a theory imparting to the body a dignity which animists have reserved exclusively for the intangible in man, and which gives

added weight and importance to his plea for a knowledge of the functions of that idealized body.

At a later period, when Wedekind was accorded a hearing on the stage and had won for himself an assured position of authority as an author and dramatist, he made use in the theatre of much of the material contained in this volume to further advance and strike home his ideas. Sure of himself and his audience, all restraint was thrown to the winds with a result not altogether happy.

Mr. Pollard's portraiture of Wedekind and analysis of his drama remains the most vivid and comprehensive in English, or for that matter in any language, and no greater service can be done the reader of this volume than to continue the quotation from "Masks and Minstrels of New Germany" which forms the opening paragraph of this introduction:

"For several reasons, I begin with Frank Wedekind. He has, for one

thing, communicated to his dramatic creations the varieté ideas, the music-hall style, so to say, which he brought from those early days, when he appeared upon this or that intimate or independent stage as a performer of his own work. Nextly, it is he who has most practically, most brutally, put upon the stage figures and ideas that were profane or barbaric expressions of the lyric unmoralities in Nietzsche. The line from Nietzsche to Wedekind, from the music-hall expression of artistic personality to Wedekind, is direct and not to be mistaken.

"What was theoretically sublime in Nietzsche became the actually bizarre if not ridiculous in Wedekind.

"Wedekind chiefly represents complete divorce from all the old man-made moralities. He and his characters are not so much above those moralities, as outside of them. He treats humanity diabolically; there is never any trace of divine pity in him. The music hall's complete freedom from society's or-

dinary restraints; its sheerly physiologic interpretation of life; its entire forgetfulness of ethical or moral reasonableness; are all typified in Wedekind's art. All life is for him a music-hall performance. The effects of things move him; causes, morals, old labels like 'good and evil,' or 'the wages of sin,' do not move him at all. He is the essential modern expression, through art, of that savage doctrine in nature which orders that the stronger reptile devour the weaker. Doctrine, however, is the wrong word to apply to Wedekind; he is as above doctrines as he is outside of the old humanities. He has in him something of Machiavelli, something of Casanova, and the more satanic egoisms of Nietzsche; he remains a strange, uncanny, isolated, abnormal figure, and is yet, in his very remoteness from all normalities and all moralities, typical of modern Germany's throwing away from old, too long accepted things.

"It is Wedekind's 'Spring's Awakening' (Fruehlings Erwachen) which first brought him into notice beyond the German borders. That tragedy upon our youth's need for sexual illumination was brutal and melancholy enough; and will never be without its value for our time; yet it is mild compared to some of the other plays from his pen.

"An abnormal, an eccentric, Wedekind has always been. He was an eccentric performer, in the music-hall interpretations he gave; he was eccentric as dramatist. Little that was abnormal in pathology of sex, or nerves, or sanity, escaped his treatment as material for plays. He was eccentric, outside of all the elder moral, or critical, or artistic scruples, or even scruples about the public or his own profit. He did not merely satirize his public, as Shaw did; he insulted it, both as playwright and as performer. Neither censors nor jailors lessened the fury with which he imposed his eccentric ego upon his time in Germany. Against the time serving

of Sudermann and the dreamy complaining of Hauptmann, Wedekind loomed as some vast irresistible monster, some Juggernaut that moved ruthlessly on over the blood and bones of the playgoing public. He cared as little for style or form in his plays as he cared for morals. For him, as for Meredith, the 'chaos illumined by lightning' of Wilde applies; his dramatic work is more chaotic than any other in our time, and yet has flashes, moments, of genius, that irritate by their very impertinence. He treats humanity as an aggregation of atoms; it amuses him to galvanize those atoms into this or that attitude. He has no cowardices of texts and teachings, no hymns to sing to humanity. We are marionettes for his amusement; that is all.

"Wedekind's life has been as extraordinary as his work. Indeed, if we would fully understand the one, we must examine the other. They must be taken together, as in the case of

Verlaine, or of Wilde. Only, as against the apparent contradictions in those other cases, Wedekind's life and his work have always had eccentricities and abnormalities in common.

"He was born, 1864, in Hanover. His father had been a physician in the Orient, one of the rebels of '48, gone to America, and been a pioneer in San Francisco, where he married. Frank Wedekind's mother was of a Wurttemberg family; she had reached San Francisco in the adventuring vagabondage of the stage artist. Wedekind senior made money in land, and returned to Hanover, where Frank was born. The family moved to Lenzburg, where Frank's first youth had its untrammeled way. The passion for writing was his from the first, but his father made him study law in Munich. There, however, he consorted only with artists and players. His studies shifted to Zurich, where with others of his own age he started the so-called Ulrich-Hutten circle, furthering the cause of modernity

in literature. To this circle belonged such as Karl Henckell, John Henry Mackay, Otto Erich Hartleben and the two brothers Hauptmann. Wedekind here came first into touch with Strindberg. In 1888, his father dead, Wedekind returned to Munich with his patrimony. Artistic ferment tossed him hither and thither; he went to Paris and to London, flinging away his patrimony and much of his physical and spiritual health. He learned, then, as Maximilian Harden has pointed out, all the centres of European culture, all the sinks of its perversity and its crookedness. He squandered his money and his beliefs alike recklessly. In 1891 he returned again to Munich, in funds, the old family home in Lenzburg having been sold.

"The first editor to recognize Wedekind was Albert Langen, of *Simplicissimus*, who took him onto the staff of that weekly. Karl Heine, of the Leipzig Literary Society, also took up Wedekind, and put on such plays of

his as 'Earth Spirit' (Der Erdgeist), 1895, 'The Tenor' (Der Kammersaenger), 1899, and 'The Love Potion' (Der Liebestrank), 1899, in which Wedekind himself played important parts. These were his first successes, both as writer and public performer. An action for lèse-majesté was brought against him about this time; he fled to Paris; but eventually gave himself up, and served a sentence in the fortress of Koenigstein. This episode brought him more notoriety than all he had accomplished in art. Then came the 'Uberbrettl' period, in which Wedekind was active as singer and performer, as has already been told on an earlier page. The variety theatres of Berlin, of Munich, and many other towns knew him. In 1904 he joined the forces of Max Reinhardt at the German Theatre (Deutsches Theater) in Berlin, acting in such pieces of his own as 'Spring's Awakening' (Fruehlings Erwachen), written in 1891, 'Earth Spirit,' and 'Hidalla,' 1904.

"In 1906, Wedekind married Tillie Niemann, an actress, and in 1908 left Berlin to settle again in Munich. The name Wedekind is rich in talents besides that of Frank. His sister Erika is well known as a brilliant singer; a brother Donald aped Wedekind's career, at least in literature, but lacked Frank's robust physical and mental equipment. Donald wandered in America, retired to a monastery, wrote a weird novel, drifted from editorial desk to music-hall platform, and finally shot himself in Vienna in 1908.

"Only in some of his first verses will you find trace of an idealistic youthfulness having once dwelt in Wedekind. He began, as Conradi, as Nietzsche, with some yearning for the illimitable beauties that spring seems to conjure in the human soul; the actualities of life appear to have buffeted all those fine fancies out of him at the first touch, and forever. In his later work there is not one single link that binds

him to his human kind. Joy of life died in him so young that he has forgotten that it still exists in others.

"What has always been to the fore in his preoccupation with the sexual relation between the sexes is the brutal, the diabolic, in them. His bitter, cynical irony has played about every normal and abnormal gesture of human passion that experience or imagination can conceive. He is the great Denier of our time. He denies morals, denies custom, denies the laws and scruples of society and art. Whether the barriers of nicety and decency — to use words intelligible to the polite! — which Wedekind has kicked down can ever again be put up as permanently as before in art, is a fine question. He denies the ideal, denies even what is.

"It is in the volume 'Countess Russalka' (Furstin Russalka), 1897, that one should look for the first signs of Wedekind's artistic temper. This volume held stories, poems, and pantomines. It gave some of his earliest, and also some of his most characteristic work.

"'Spring's Awakening' will probably live longer than any other Wedekind play. Brutal as it is, it still has a vestige of idealism, of which the later Wedekind retains no trace. It was a children's tragedy of the most awful, this play, and no greater indictment of the folly of letting hypocrisy and shamefulness keep the young of both sexes blind to what sex means has ever been written. In quite recent times this matter of the awakening of sex, of the wide-spread and disastrous prudery about diseases of sex, has gradually been creeping into publicity in Anglo-Saxon countries. Here and there a medical man courageous enough to tell the truth has brought an indictment against the way adults conspire to pretend diseases of sex as non-existent, and against the way children are brought up in ignorance of sexual functions. Wedekind was the first to bring that indictment through dramatic art.

"One of the stories in 'Furstin Russalka' had already outlined the subject of 'Spring's Awakening.' That interim period of pubescence, when youth is torn between its dread of the unknown and its desires, was the theme which first moved Wedekind in his story of 'Rabbi Esra' in the 'Russalka' collection, and later in the play. Nothing could be more awful, more tragic, than the manner in which his play exposes the injustice which parents do their children by letting them stay in ignorance concerning all the body's natural functions. Almost every hypocrisy common in every modern country's attitude toward children is flayed bitterly by Wedekind. One character in an early story declares that she would never have supposed 'that one could bear children without having been married'; *Countess Russalka* herself was of the steadfast belief that God had given her parents children because they had been married in church, and not because early in their married life they lived together. *Frau*

Bergmann in the last act of 'Spring's Awakening' explains to the fifteen-year-old *Wendla* that the latter has a child, only to have the latter exclaim: 'But mother, that isn't possible. Why, — I'm not married!' Whereon comes her curt reproach: 'Oh, mother, why didn't you tell me everything?' and *Frau Bergmann's* reply: 'I dealt with you exactly as my dear mother dealt with me.' In that latter frightful confession, you have the whole bitter irony of Wedekind's indictment. It is the curse of Yesterday that has put its pall of ignorance upon so many of these danger spots in Today's consciousness; in the contrast between that reply of *Frau Bergmann's* and the frightful tragedy overwhelming the children in this play lies the whole difference between the old hypocrisies and the enlightenment for which all our modern world is still too slowly striving. All the mongrel results of half culture, all the false shame and hypocrisy preventing parent and child from dealing straightforwardly

with the truth in things physical, are castigated in this play.

"If in 'Spring's Awakening' our modern world first came to realize Wedekind's concentration upon sex, that concentration was to be expressed even more forcibly afterwards. There was, in the children's tragedy referred to, still much of the unquenched idealist in Wedekind; indeed, it was what gleamed through the lines suggesting the bitter way in which the great world of experience had brutally upset the ideal in Wedekind's own youth that gave this play much of its power. The play was applicable wherever old hypocrisies between parent and child still linger; but the most tremendously international creation of Wedekind was to come later, in the character of *Lulu*, the heroine of 'Earth Spirit' and its sequel, 'The Box of Pandora.'

"*Lulu* was a daughter of the people, who rose thence from one story of society to another without ever completely feeling at home on any *étage*.

Literally she was of the people; she knew neither parent; she was of the earth, the 'Earth Spirit' truly; its soil clung to her always. First a flower girl; then adventuress, then a lady in society, she goes always forward upon her single business, that of giving her sexuality one triumph after another over the opposing sex. She deceives this man, ruins another, murders another. She is the eternal temptress; she embodies the everlasting struggle between the sexes; she is untameable, merciless, and seems immortal. In the sequel to 'Earth Spirit,' *Lulu* has definitely become a professional general in the bitter war against the male. In 'The Box of Pandora' we find her released from the prison to which the murder in the other play had brought her; though free from that constraint, she is now more and more the slave of her own passions and sinks from one phase of courtesanship to another. There is no abomination of vice or extortion to which she does not come,

both actively and passively; she exhausts every iniquitous corner of every capital of the world's vice; mires lower and lower, in Paris, and then London; to end, at last, as streetwalker in a London garret, murdered by a Jack the Ripper in one of the most appalling scenes ever written in our time in any tongue.

"No artist in our time, or perhaps in any time, has gone farther to the extreme, in revolt from his embittered youth, than Wedekind. If at first his bitterness was a mask to conceal the hurt of his young manhood, it became eventually the man himself, an inseparable part of his ego. That he has been able to make that ego stream so strongly upon the outer world of international art, proves him a dramatic force of truly continental calibre. There are those, of course, who find Wedekind simply the last human word in that degeneration once put into circulation as a phrase for the general abuse; those who murmur of Krafft-Ebing, and of

Nietzsche dying in a madhouse. They declare the profitlessness of putting into plays characters and actions which, after all, are not typical but abnormal. They do not deny that such people, such incidents, such life, as are in Wedekind's plays, exist; but they question the value of putting them into play or print. Against which it is to be remarked that even if they only recorded the utterest abnormalities, from the most inhuman standpoint, these plays of Wedekind will have to be reckoned with by the future student of today's civilization. In that larger reckoning our abnormalities as well as our normalities must figure.

"Students of psychology, moreover, may easily enough illumine the case of Wedekind to suit their theories. To Wedekind, as we have seen, humanity has never been other than atoms under a microscope. To hold humanity under the microscope is exactly the method of the conscious psychologist; he notes actions, causes and effects; he applies

his observations, deduces from them; the human machine becomes obvious and simple to him. Wedekind may, then, by some be held consciously or unconsciously to enact the psychologist in his drama; not only to let the atoms move under his microscope, but to let us, the playgoers, watch the very process of psychologic exposition. All this, as I said, if you are able, in what seems to others only chaotic, to find psychology.

"Whatever were the first influences upon Wedekind, as Nietzsche, Strindberg, and the French writers, essentially it was his own life that fashioned him to eventual individualism as artist. If in matter he occasionally tried paths that had been trodden in Scandinavia or France, in manner he was never anything but grotesquely himself; he scorned any pattern whatsoever; his work was nothing but the eruption, the ebullition of his ego and its ideas. Even in matter he surpassed in unscrupulousness and disregard for old

shames, old restraints, anything that others had done. By comparison, Strindberg's 'Fraulein Julie' seems almost dainty, and the pseudomedical revelations in the novels of D'Annunzio seem packed in saccharine rhetoric.

"Wedekind's intense joy in the body is as pagan as that of the Greeks, but expressed far more in terms of literal physics. For him there is no veiling the essential thing itself by phrases about a 'human form divine,' 'antique boy-worship of the Greeks,' or even the allusiveness of a Gautier declaring that 'a woman who has wit enough to be beautiful has wit enough.' In him no tenor murmurs about 'fair boys' who are 'lovely as Antinous.' He goes straight to the rude core of man's delight in woman's body. If he himself declared once that 'life is a toboggan-slide,' we must, as we examine his paramount obsession, declare that in him the cult of the human body is chiefly expressed in intense devotion to woman's every gesture, every motion

of her gait. *Prince Escerny* said of *Lulu:* 'When she dances her solo, she becomes drunk with her own beauty, with which she is in love up to the ears!' To Wedekind, as to Heine, the real Song of Songs in this our day is the song in a woman's form.

"Through the most grotesque situations that occur between the extraordinary people in his plays — noblemen, trapeze performers, adventurers, cocottes, and school children — the idea that only in a perfect body can the perfect spirit dwell, rings out. The girl *Hidalla,* after all the years she has spent in seclusion with many other girls in that strange educational institution pictured in 'Mine-Haha,' recalls of her fellows nothing, nothing save their — gait. Not Felicien Rops himself has expressed the sheer animality of the female form as has Wedekind; the Belgian could not get the flowing vividness of motion into his strokes that the German has put into his prose. The case of *Hidalla* is nothing but a

girl's education in worship of her own body. The gradual dawning in her of appreciation for the suavity of her limbs, of 'that joy which came to her as the consciousness of her own body came to her, and which found vent again in every slightest gesture,' is typical of this trait in Wedekind's art. Even in early verses in the 'Countess Russalka' collection was the line addressed to a girl: 'Your irresistibility is in your legs . . .' and in the 'Galathea' ballad (German Chansons) he declared that he 'Yearned to kiss your knees, Spelling as they do temptation. . . .' Of gait and rhythm in the body we find this in 'Mine-Haha': 'A person's walk is not an accidental thing. It depends directly on the way the body is built. . . . Human gait has its rhythm that is not to be expressed in words, that can only be felt. From this rhythm you may easily reconstruct the entire body.'

"This instinct for bodily rhythm Wedekind put among the vital attributes

of his elemental female, *Lulu*. The rhythm of her own body moves *Lulu* to a very passion, a need, for dancing; if for one evening she fails to give her dance, she admits: 'I dream all night that I am dancing, and next day every bone in me aches.' Her body excites not only in others but in herself, 'the maddest excitement.' One, a poet, praises her body thus: 'Through this gown your stature is as a symphony to me. These fine ankles are as a Cantabile; this ravishing curve, and this knee, are as a Capriccio; and this the mighty Andante of voluptuousness.'

"As we remember the emphasis on these qualities in body and gait that runs through all Wedekind writes, those early 'Pantomime Dances' in the 'Furstin Russalka' volume come more and more to express Wedekind's real attitude toward life. That attitude is one of inhuman disdain. Before his cynically distorting mirror he lets all life pass; all are equal before that ironic reflector. His relentless deter-

mination to fling his figures about into frightful and abnormal postures, detracts from our ability to feel anything of his as a complete work of art. Wedekind is as chaotic as Nature herself; there is no notion absurder than that Nature is logical or artistic in the petty sense. The sheerly profane expression of Nietzsche's most inhuman egoism is Wedekind. Humanity has moved his pity as much as it has moved Vesuvius, when that volcano was in eruption.

"To further his conception of all life as an expression of the body, either for brutality or beauty, he has sacrificed not alone casual characters and types in ordinary human society, but most of the actual men and women whom he has known in the flesh. There is hardly a play of his that has not some gross, hideous version of a real and well-known personage. What makes all this the more frightful is that some truth is in even the most brutal of Wedekind's apparent distortions. Have

we not heard, for many years, the sententious: 'In the most civilized, the most sophisticated of us, dwells still the primal brute, the savage. But no man dares proclaim the real thoughts and words of that brute part of us.' That is just what Wedekind has dared to do: he has laid bare all the brute in normal, as well as in abnormal mankind. If he has gone to the other extreme — has refused to see that in us human creatures there is also something beside the brute — he has none the less perfectly fulfilled the old artistic law that you must always, to bring your point home, tell not only the truth but more than the truth: you must exaggerate. Wedekind has exaggerated the brutal qualities in us, until he has made us shudder. He is eccentric and perverse; the tragic comedian of the abnormal; whether he is genius of psychology or only genius of chaos, he has gashed the irremediable savagery of our time, surviving through centuries of so-called civilization, so deeply upon

the theatre and upon literature that he may survive when time serving photographers, or complaining idealists, are forgotten."

EXCERPTS FROM WEDEKIND'S PREFACE ON EROTICISM

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Most people divide their fellow men into two large classes: Their friends and their foes; those who speak their tongue, and those who speak different languages; those who try to help them in their development, and those who try to hinder this development.

And I should like to divide my fellow men into two large classes. The one class has, since creation, championed the adage: FLESH REMAINS FLESH — AS OPPOSED TO SPIRIT.

Naturally, here the spirit is the higher element, the sovereign absolute, which severely punishes every revolutionary utterance of the flesh.

But the flesh has never submitted itself to this contempt and degradation for any length of time, and has over and over again played the maddest pranks on the champions of the adage: FLESH REMAINS FLESH—AS OPPOSED TO SPIRIT.

As a result of these everlasting pranks a

new party has appeared which, after many ripe experiences, has promulgated the adage: THE FLESH HAS ITS OWN SPIRIT.

And it is with the champions of this new theory in mind that the stories contained in this volume have been written. All of their problems center around the spirit of the flesh, which we usually term eroticism. And here allow me to state that it is not only in Germany that this eroticism has been looked upon with fearful dread; and it is for this reason that I am taking it upon myself to say a few impartial words on this subject.

As a result of all sorts of accidents the problem of sex education has been coming into the foreground for many years past.

The duty of the home is to inform maturing children that there are no indecent happenings in nature, but that there are only good and evil, sensible and unsensible occurrences. Furthermore, that there are *indecent people who do not know how to talk about or behave decently in connection with nature's functions.*

Why is this? It is because such people

lack culture and spiritual freedom.

The youth of today does not grow up in natural blindness and stupidity, and it is mad folly to try to blind them in regard to sex questions.

And still this folly has saturated our homes and schools for the last century. And why? For fear that a serious consideration of eroticism would do harm rather than good.

This fear is the result of self-deception. Parents have not, as they thought, placed a ban on such subjects for fear of harming their offspring, but because they have never been able to talk among themselves on eroticism for the very reason that they themselves had never been taught to consider it seriously.

And why? Why has this subject always been banned as indecent?

Because very often, and without any reason, these discussions have led to the most serious kind of quarrels. And the reason for these quarrels is that such discussions lead into sensitive channels in which husband or wife, especially when

they live together, become hurt at the slightest provocation; sensitive channels in which women do not care to justify themselves to any one, and least of all to their husbands. To cite an example of such a sensitive channel let me mention: the bodily charm of woman, or the bodily health of man.

We know the mechanism of a motor, and of an airship, but we know nothing of the mechanism of the marriage. Thousands of cultured people believe that they will be inseparably united once the marriage ceremony is over. No account is taken of the real reason for the bond between man and wife. Is it any wonder then that this error leads so often to divorce?

In our present-day society we speak more guardedly about politics than we do about religion. During the Reformation the case, of course, was the opposite. And it is in just such a manner that we are more guarded today in speaking about sex questions than we are about politics. Once, however, a general understanding of this subject has been arrived at there will probably be a great change.

PRINCESS RUSSALKA

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"You are wondering how I happened to become a 'Social Democrat' and marry a Socialist leader?" asked Princess Russalka of her friend, the recently married Baroness Hohenwart. "The reason was," she continued, "that my marriage with the Duke of Galliera left me childless."

"But is that a reason?" asked the baroness, blushing.

"Perhaps my whole youth is to blame," said the princess. "It's a rather hard story to tell. As a child I was greatly taken up with my own importance. I knew nothing higher in the world than myself. I looked at myself in the mirror as at something holy. Yet with all I was merry and bold, though I always failed to see any humor in certain things. My inner pride revolted itself then. And this pride later on proved to be my fate. When my sister Amelia began talking

to me one evening about the way in which people came into the world, I could have almost strangled her. I was very religious, and often conversed *in persona* with God for hours at a time. I had the firm belief that God had created me. I told myself that what man made had no spirit. Amelia and I grew up in the castle of Schwarzeneck in Bohemia, cut off from the rest of the world. The only companions we had were a dried-up, old major domo, and a very cold-blooded governess. I do not know where Amelia got her knowledge. She was, it is true, two years older than I, and was phlegmatic and lazy. One evening she told me that the miller's daughter in the village had a child. I was furious, and told her that what she was saying was impossible. Our parents had been married in a church and that was why God had given them children, not because they had lived together during the first few years of their married life. It seemed to me as if Amelia were

trying to deprive me of my right of living. In the middle of the night I prayed to God that He might show me that I was right, and not Amelia; and I distinctly heard a voice say, "You are right, Russalka, you are quite right." And when my sister, a few days later, again began talking about such things, I swore by God and all that there were no illegitimate children in the world. Amelia laughed, but I was so serious in my convictions, I felt such a proselytism in myself, that day and night I yearned for the opportunity to prove my convictions.

"At Christmas time my father always brought a great many friends from Vienna for hunting. And every winter he brought the duke of Galliera with him. I was then sixteen years old. On the very first day I took him as my cavalier. He was twenty-eight, very clever and attentive, and he eased my mad resolution in every conceivable manner. Amelia and a young lieutenant from Budapest always kept near

us. In three days the catastrophe had happened. I told her about it that very evening. She turned pale as death and fainted. Then she wept and sobbed the whole night through, beat her breast and tore her hair, so that I had to use every atom of love and power I had to console her. Of course it did not do much good, but I still was so confident of myself that she, as if impelled by some higher force, knelt down before me and clutched my knees.

"After New Year's all the guests left. Since I had shown Amelia my absolute confidence in the whole affair I hardly looked at the duke any more. He accepted my disregard in a very graceful manner.

"Then came the spring, and at times I became frightened. I prayed to God that He might not let my belief in Him vaccilate. But I did not have the least reason for it. And finally, one September evening, I said to my sister, "You see, I was right. And from now on please do not give me your

opinion about things." She had said nothing more about it. Now she looked at me with big eyes, fell on my neck and kissed me.

"But at Christmas time, when the duke again came with my father, I was overcome with emotions that I had never felt before. My father surprised us and the duke asked for my hand in marriage.

"We spent our honeymoon in Naples. I was very, very happy. Then we went to the castle of Egersdorf, where we could live just for our happiness, shut off from the rest of the world. I yearned for a child as only a young married woman can. It seemed incredible that this joy should now be denied to me. During the first year I spoke of it daily, as of something that was as certain to come as winter and spring. But I had no child. I prayed for whole nights at a time; I knelt and prayed that God might let me die rather than deny us His blessing. But I had no child. And besides, my hus-

band began to gaze at me queerly, and I noticed that his love for me was growing cooler. We were bored.

"Then my cousin, the countess Telecky came from Vienna to visit us. My husband loathed her, but for me she was a new world. She had read everything: Ibsen, Tolstoy, Zola, Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, and Sudermann; she was a human circulating library. Within six months she had changed me into as fanatical an atheist as I had before been a Catholic. And when finally I did not feel one more atom of faith, of confidence in myself; when I had lost all that could have helped me bear up under a misfortune, then I found that she had won over my husband in the meantime, and was already bearing a child by him.

"I was taken, unconscious, to Vienna. For weeks I lay in a high fever. After my convalescence I went to my father to ask him to help me procure a divorce. At the word "divorce" he told

me to leave his home. Then I came here, to Berlin, to secure a lawyer, but I instantly saw that in whatever society I might go I would only meet the sort of people of which the countess Telecky was a type. I appeared to myself like a remnant from the Middle Ages, which happened to remain unnoticed in a secluded spot. I yearned for all that was modern. I cut off my lovely hair, went in men's clothes to the artists' ball, and wrote about the woman question. Before a year had passed I appeared publicly at meetings.

"I met Doctor Rappart at the 'first night' of 'Hedda Gabler.' A few days later, I heard him speak at a Social Democratic meeting. Then he visited me. His first words were a sincere appeal that, on account of the feminine in me, on account of the high calling of making a good wife, I should give up this mad existence. He told me that I was acting against my nature; it might be all right for others, but not

for me. At first I defended myself on the ground of service to my cause, but he had fathomed me so clearly that I sat there like a child who was being punished. The third time he called he asked me to become his wife. I refused, although I had learned to love him. Wherever I went they spoke of him; all Berlin raved about him, the tribune of the people, the future ruler. I watched, at a parade on Unter den Linden, how the crowd cheered him. I heard some workingmen telling each other that there was nothing dearer to this man than his life's work, and I knew what was next dearest to him. But I did not have the courage any more; I felt myself divorced from all worldly happiness, because I doubted whether I could ever bear a man any children.

"Then came the most terrible days I have ever lived through. I decided to die, and took morphine. They took me to a hospital. When I regained

consciousness, I wept because I had done all in vain. But there he stood at my bedside and leaned over me. The doctors left us alone, and then — then all my strength gave way. I wept and wept on his breast, and told him everything.

"I begged him to let me go away, but he was with me every day. He told me things, which he himself doubted, only to console me. And finally — I knew that if there was any happiness in this world for me it was he who could give it. Then I fell on his neck and let him cover me with kisses, while I, through it all, felt entirely unworthy of him.

"We were married. He insisted that we be also married by the Church. And now . . ."

The princess arose quickly, went into the next room and brought out the rosy, little, blue-eyed Social Democrat, who measured the baroness with a deep, stern look.

"Now conceive my happiness!"

The baroness smiled. "I should much prefer a little baron — or even a baroness."

THE GRISLY SUITOR.

Leonie Fisher had a fine nature. The charm of her features, which were rather sweet than pretty, lay in the expression of the eyes and of the somewhat drawn-up lips. The judge of human nature who saw her had to confess that Leonie's attractions were not perishable, and that a woman with the same charms would be just as alluring as the young girl. The shape of her head, and the line of smooth closely coifed black hair, were perfect. She was rather plump, but her hips were a little too thin; her foot was small, and her hands also would probably have been pretty if she had not been keeping house ever since the end of her school days. She did the sweeping, cooking, cleaning and washing.

Leonie Fisher was of that type which is at ease in all kinds of society, a type which is never offensive, thanks to an inborn tact and unselfish mind;

a type which always sympathizes with others.

Since her fifth year Leonie had had no mother and had never been outside of the little town of Lenzburg. Her father was in his shop all day long, and in the evenings would sit with some sullen old men around a poorly lighted table, in one of the innumerable inns, and never came home before eleven o'clock. Since her older sister had died Leonie had spent almost every evening at home alone, doing some fine crocheting or reading a book from the town library. And she had always been satisfied. When she was only seventeen she could have married well. Her father was furious at the time that she had refused the offer. But she had smiled quietly to herself; she would wait until the right one came along; she did not believe in trying out. And when the right man did appear she wasted no time in deliberating. He was of medium height, about thirty-five years old, and he had a profitable business.

But what attracted her most was that he could be serious, and when she wanted to she could talk to him about things that did not concern either his business or her father's shop.

The young couple spent their honeymoon at the Garda See. There they sat in the afternoon sun on the verandah, spoke but little, and were thankful for the beautiful world about them. Leonie smiled whenever she caught her husband's eyes. Then he would glance at her earnestly so that she blushed up to the roots of her hair, but immediately he would look at her in a supplicating and helpless manner as if he were begging her pardon. It always ended when she laid her hand in his and let him fondle it. And thus it went every day from dawn to sunset. Leonie enjoyed her happiness without affectation, in absolute abandon, but without any judgment, and without any consideration of her person. She loved love above all, and but seldom was she happy at the thought of

having found such a kind, good man to share her future life with her. And it was as she had dreamed during the many long evenings that she sat at home alone. At the altar she had promised herself never to hold any one responsible for her marriage but herself. And besides, she had prayed to heaven to spare her and hers from all unlooked for sorrows.

Quiet reigned in the large hotel. The door to their room was locked and the heavy, green curtains were drawn. There was a night lamp burning on the table. It was long past midnight but the young couple could not sleep. It was probably because they had such little exercise during the daytime, and because they always drank black coffee after their dinner.

"How does it happen," asked the young man in a whisper, "that a young girl of your age, with so much emotion, is always so quiet. The way you talk and act among people makes one believe that you have lived before. Other

girls of your age are always out, but you grow quieter and more sedate from day to day.

"Perhaps it is on account of what I went through in my youth," answered the young woman. Her eyes glowed in the black night that lay about them.

"What did you go through?"

"Why, when my sister died. Didn't I ever tell you about it?"

"No. That is, I don't remember that you did."

"You have seen her picture. She was nearly a head taller than I am, and she had a much stronger constitution. Her arms were so large that I could hardly get my two hands around them. But with all of it she was neither fat nor clumsy. She was more supple than I, and when she walked the earth seemed to bend with her steps. Perhaps it was on account of her large, well rounded hips. But her neck was the most beautiful part of her body. When I think of her now the first thing I see is her beautifully

molded neck and her lovely, sloping shoulders. She was so strong and healthy that no one would have ever imagined that she would die. Only she herself used to have the most terrible thoughts; one could almost see them in her eyes. When one looked at her one thought that she was going to weep the next moment. She used to tell long stories about a catastrophe that had occurred or that was going to happen in the future; and when later on one would think over what she had said, one would realize that there was nothing in it. She was always excited and also bashful. From the mere fear of unhappiness and death she never really went out into the world until the very end; but then it was different. And that was the very thing that never gave her any peace of mind. From the very day that she put on long skirts and was confirmed, she thought of one thing only: how and when she would get married. And with it all she had a presentiment, I don't

know where from, that it would never happen — that she would die before it. And that was the basis of what finally happened.

"I remember," continued Leonie, "I was perhaps ten years old and we slept in the same bed. Next to the bed stood the crib in which my doll slept; and in the other bed slept our old nurse Lisbeth. Lisbeth snored so loud that we often woke up in the middle of the night. Then we would talk very quietly in the dark just as we are talking now; only then we did not have a four-post bed. Once Clara asked me what sort of a man I was going to marry. I had never thought about it, so I said that I did not know. Then she told me that hers would have to have broad shoulders and be large and well built; that his nose must be straight and that he would have to wear a small black moustache and have pearly teeth. His hair would be short and his ears small, while he must have well formed legs and wear large boots

with spurs. It took her half of the night to tell me about him. We thought of all of our acquaintances, but there was not one among them who was stately enough. . . . And finally she said, with her head against my breast and in a sobbing voice: 'I think that I will have to marry a man of fifty or sixty years, who has lost all of his teeth and who coughs and sputters at every word he utters. Oh, Leonie, Leonie, if you only knew how much I fear and dread it!' All the blood had gone to her head and her arms were as hot as fire.

"And on another night when Lisbeth was again snoring loudly Clara told me all about life, why one marries, and why women dress differently than men. I found it all very natural, but she made a dismal story of it. She could hardly speak and I could hear her heart beating. I had never known anything about all she told me, but I had never imagined anything unnatural either.

"When she came back from Italy

three years later — she had by this time become a truly beautiful girl, aside from her corpulence — immediately an old man, a trembling old court recorder, proposed marriage to her. For four weeks she did not get over the shock. She did not go out, she did not speak; her eyes were always on the ground so that she never looked at any one any more. It seemed almost as if she were losing her mind. The recorder was a very much respected man; but of course I could never have loved him either. He told my father that he would like to marry Clara because her lips were never firmly closed, which, he felt, implied that she had a good heart. And he was right. At first she received him in quite a friendly manner. But when she realized what his intentions were, she shrieked aloud and had terrible cramps. We had to make cold applications for her all day.

"In the following summer Rudolf Eisner came to Lenzburg. And it was

as if heaven had sent him, for he and Clara seemed to have been made just for each other, as no couple ever had been before. She met him for the first time when she was going bathing; and immediately it seemed as if some one had come into her life. She could hardly go on walking. That evening when we were alone she told me about it; she had felt the blood rushing through all of her veins she said. When she came home to supper that evening she complained of the tepidness of the water, and in reality it was only fifty-two degrees.

"It was very hard for her to avoid showing her feeling, but it was just the same with him. The very next day he came to the store to buy cigars. Clara was watching from the window. He was a veritable Hercules. His chest was so well developed that a heavy wagon could have passed over it; he had no moustache yet — he was only twenty-three years old; his mouth was broad and full, while his lips were thin

but full of expression. When he was going out of the lower gate he bent his head unconsciously; he wore his hat on the back of his head — that was the only untidy thing about him. His head was firm, but dignified and graceful; he did not carry it lowered like a steer, but high like a lion. He had just served in the army — he was in the artillery, I think — and now he was agent for a metal company. I trembled from pure delight when I saw Clara standing next to me breathing fast and oblivious of all that was passing around her. I was still a perfect child at the time, but I must say that when two weeks later they became secretly engaged, I am sure that I was just as happy about it as they themselves.

"They met at the post office. He was writing a postal card; she also wanted to write one so he gave her the pen, and then they became engaged. They had hardly spoken a word. He had looked into her soul, and she had

gazed into his; and then all was as clear and firm as the vaulted heavens. When she came home, she kneeled down by the sofa, shrieked for happiness, and beat her feet on the floor.

"They could not announce their engagement then. They could not be married yet as he was still only a clerk; but he had prospects of becoming manager in the near future. His father was a rich miller, and Clara was to get some money also; but they would have to wait at least another year. And every evening, when his business was over, we, Clara and I, would go out into the woods together. She had to take me along, for if she had gone alone other girls would have followed to see where she was going. In the woods they would kiss for an hour, until dinner time. I always sat close by; Clara had insisted that I should never leave her alone with him for a minute, and I believe that he was honestly thankful for it; in any case, he understood her; she wanted to

treasure their life's happiness with all safety. But, for me, it was no little thing to sit there every evening and watch them first blush, then tremble, and at last not say a word for an entire hour, looking all the while as serious as storm clouds. Whenever Rudolf turned around he would give me a friendly glance. I used to take my reader with me, but often the letters would dance about the page and mean nothing to me. Then when I would look up at Clara she would be wiping the tears from her eyes. Often, on our return home, I felt very sorry for her, but I was so dutiful that I did not dare say anything. And thus it went on for a whole year, in sunshine, rain, and snow.

"Towards the end of the next summer, in the early part of September, Rudolf went home one day and settled everything with his father. His father was to give him enough money to buy a partnership in the business. That would be in February; then he could

get married and take Clara to Italy. Cards were sent out immediately; all of Lenzburg congratulated them and Clara felt considerably embarrassed. Everything seemed so queer to her that she often became as lively as other engaged girls.

"Now, of course, he came to the house every night. Father sat at the inn and I did my lessons. Clara and Rudolf did their very best not to become so excited as in the beginning; the kissing was not the same any longer; they had become wiser, and the wedding day was coming nearer. But they devoured each other with their eyes; I can still see them sitting silently opposite one another, she on the sofa and he on the taboret, like two mummies. Sometimes, in order to pass the time away, I would tell them about what I was reading until I saw that they were not listening to me. Then I also grew silent and wrote my composition. There was a deathlike quiet. All that could be heard was the sputter-

ing of the lamp, the scratching of my pen, and our breathing.

"On the first of December, Clara had a terrible fit. It was right after dinner. She lost control of her mind, her face and hands became blue, her breathing almost stopped, and her heart beat violently. During the entire morning she had feared that war was going to break out on her wedding day and that Rudolf would have to ride with the artillery. I opened her waist and loosened her stays, but it did no good. When the doctor arrived she was already in bed. He pronounced it a bad heart attack. He gave her something that brought her back to consciousness again. Her first words on opening her eyes were, "Oh, Leonie, Oh, Leonie, I am going to die!"

"That evening the doctor came again; Rudolf and I were standing at her bedside. When he left he told me that under no considerations should I allow Rudolf to see her again; he saw that it excited her too much; her whole

illness was only from excitement, and if I allowed him to see her again, it might mean her immediate death. He told my father the same. And it was for me to tell Rudolf about it. The next day, of course, I did not go to school.

"Old Lisbeth had left when Clara had returned from Italy and was able to help along in the household. And since that time I had slept in Lisbeth's bed. During the first night I was up every hour putting cold compresses on Clara's heart. On the next day, as she was no better, we engaged a trained nurse, who stayed all day, and helped along in the house so that I could go to school. Rudolf was as if turned to stone when I told him that he could not see Clara again; he did not say a word; it seemed as if he had not understood me. Morning, noon, and night he came to the shop and asked how she was getting along. She was not doing well. During the whole night Clara had been gasping for breath and

had not slept at all. Only in the morning was she able to get a few hours sleep. She had no pains, but as soon as she left her bed she became terribly dizzy. And with it all she did not look any different than usual; in fact, she looked almost better; her large eyes shone brightly and there was something powerful in her expression; she was truly wonderful to behold. Of course she always spoke of him; with tears in her eyes she begged me to allow him to come up to see her. I told her that I could not; she would soon be better and then they could get married. But she looked up at the white ceiling as if she knew very well that she would never be better. And then we would hear Rudolf walking up and down on the street below. I felt a horrible twinge in my throat. I would have liked to have knelt down at my sister's bedside and wept with her. But I told myself that for her sake, I could not show my feelings and I swallowed hard.

"The next night I dreamed that I had a talk with Rudolf. I saw him on his knees before me, his hands clasped in supplication, and in his hands he held a knife with which he wanted to kill himself. And all I could say was, 'No, no, no, no, no!' And it made me happy that I could torment him. Suddenly, all was blood. I awoke and heard Clara speaking to herself. 'Merciful God, have pity on me!' she murmured. 'Have mercy on me! In what way have I deserved this! Oh, Rudolf, Rudolf!'

"I got up and gave her a powder. Then I stood in front of the stove in my nightgown and in order to calm her, let her tell me all sorts of things about him, things that he had told her about his military career.

"My first recitation the next morning was arithmetic. I had done the problems, but when I was standing in front of the blackboard, all of a sudden I did not know how much twice twenty was. During recess the other girls

asked me what was the matter. I saw them running around the schoolhouse as if they were ghosts, and could only think of Rudolf and Clara. I went home arm in arm with my friend Marie Hemmann. She was tactful enough not to ask me why I was so quiet, and when we met Rudolf in front of our house she left me immediately.

"He was in a terrible state of excitement, and was all in a tremble. He clawed at his breast and told me that it was there that he felt how Clara was suffering, and that if anything could bring on death it was following the doctor's orders. He would like to kill that inhuman wretch for his murderous knowledge. I told him that he should tell the doctor himself; that I understood his feelings perfectly, but of course I did not have the power to do anything. Then he took my hand in his and pressed it so that it ached, and with the other he smoothed my hair. 'No,' he said, 'you cannot under-

stand, you are still nothing but a school girl. But you can be of help to me. Your father goes to the inn every evening, and then you are alone with Clara, and then . . .'

"'Oh, heavens,' I cried, 'I cannot! I cannot!' and I tore myself away from him and ran into the house. I could not go up to see Clara. I sat in the kitchen and wept and wept until dinner time.

"That evening the doctor came again and made a very hopeless face, although we could notice no change in Clara. But he had felt her pulse and had tapped her heart for a half-hour. 'Only no excitement! Anything but excitement!' he said. After supper I was again alone with her, and she told me the very same thing that Rudolf had. It was just as if they had had an understanding. She scolded me heartlessly and told me that I was not her sister. And with it all she sobbed so that her pillow was wet through and through. She told me to go downstairs and get

him. She was glad to die, she continued, and knew that there was no hope for her, but she would have to be alone with him. She was leaning on her elbow and her whole body shook with pain. I thought that it would never cease. And not until she heard his steps in the street below did she become calmer. In the middle of the night I was awakened by a cry of misery that I shall never forget. I jumped up and gave her a glass of water. She drank a whole bottle. She told me that she had had a bad dream. The following morning as I was getting dressed she told me what she had dreamed. It was terrible.

"As soon as she closed her eyes, she always saw an old man. The first time he appeared was when she had had her fit. He was bald, and his large, leaf-like ears stood out far from his head. He had a short gray beard, and a very small nose. His breast was like a child's, and he had thin, bony legs. He always appeared in a high hat and

a frock coat, and used a cane to feel his way along. His face was so repulsive that it almost froze the blood in one's veins. He had immediately appeared to her as her husband-to-be; in two weeks he was to marry her. And each time he would kiss her, she always tried to push him away with her knees and elbows, but he held her head so tight that she could not resist his caresses. And that night he had wanted to take her along with him. Rudolf had protected her, but the old man had hit him across the eyes with his cane. Then he had bent over her. She was fully conscious that she was in bed. Always nearer came his red-rimmed eyes and his freckled face, and only just as he placed his bony hands on her neck, had she had the power to cry out. 'Oh, Rudolf,' she sobbed with folded hands, 'I shall not see you again, I shall not see you again.'

"When I came down stairs I found Rudolf in the shop, talking to my father with his head bowed in grief, but he

was so manly, so youthful, and had such a soulful expression that he was wonderful to look upon.

"During my first two recitations I was all confused. I had my poor sister's nightmare continually before my eyes. Then we had composition, and I gradually collected my thoughts. Our teacher was an old man, but he was kind-hearted. Each one of us fifteen girls used to read the same composition to him, one after another, and yet he always found something praiseworthy to say to every girl. The only thing that he could not bear was when our skirts were too short, and when we wore colored hair ribbons. Then he said we were proud little chits. Marie Hemmann told him once, when he was remarking about her dress, that it was not her fault that her legs were so long. Then he raised the cover of his desk and did not come out of his hiding place for a quarter of an hour.

" 'It is death,' I said to myself, 'it is death that is coming to get her.'

And then I decided to go to the doctor right after school and ask him whether there was any chance for Clara's recovery. There was a gnawing in me; I had the feeling that I was going to be ill myself. I felt as if I were in Clara's place. I felt her yearning for Rudolf and also her horror for the old man. 'You are an awful wretch without feeling,' I said to myself; 'Clara is terribly excited because she cannot see him, and she cannot possibly get any worse if she does see him, and it will probably calm her if anything. And if she were to die, and if she were really to die, he could not even say farewell to her! And then I told myself that the old man had no right to her, that no one but Rudolf had the right to kiss her. 'The old man is death,' I said to myself, 'and Rudolf is life. When Rudolf is with her the old man will not dare to come. And if the old man is to get her anyway, then it makes no difference if she does see Rudolf once more.'

"At noon, when school was over, I ran to the doctor; I had left my bag in school; I must have looked quite wan. The doctor drew me towards him and told me that he had known for a long time that there was no chance for her recovery; that his drugs had been wholly useless, but that I should not weep as I must realize that God would take care of her. Then the tears came to my eyes; I told him that I only wanted to find out. Then he said that all might be well again, but in such a hopeless way that I knew he just said it to calm me.

"I feared that the worst might have already happened without Rudolf having seen her, and I ran all the way home, only to find Clara the same as when I had left her. She was beautiful as a rose in full bloom, and she spoke very quickly. 'Let him come, Leonie; let him come up to me' she sobbed. And I replied, 'All right, this evening.' Then she threw her arms about me, pressed me close to her breast and

kissed me as if I had been Rudolf himself. I thought of what the doctor had said and also of her terrible phantasies. Before she let me out of her embrace, she whispered in my ear, 'But you must leave me alone with him.' And I said that I would. Then the nurse came with Clara's soup, and I went in to have my supper.

"While we were still at the table a thought tore through my head. Already yesterday she had told me that she wanted to be alone with him. In spite of the fact that I was still at school I knew very well what she wanted of him. I grew hot and cold all over. 'No,' I said to myself, 'you cannot allow that.' Clara had up to this time been a respectable girl, but if she did this she would be so no longer. I thought of the old man who wanted to do violence to her. And then I thought that she would have to die; yes, have to die without ever having been really loved like other women who get married. This made

me certain that God was indeed hard. If there ever was a girl created solely for love it was my sister; that I was sure of.

"That afternoon we had our Bible Class. Before the hour I walked up and down the hall with Marie Hemmann. The boys who were in our class stood there and stared at us. Marie was wearing high brown shoes, and I had on a pair of brand new low shoes. She asked how Clara was, and I yearned to tell her some of the things that were so torturing my soul. But after her first words I realized that she did not know the condition of affairs at all. I would have had to explain all to her, and rather than do that I kept quiet. During the recitation the parson, with whom all the girls were in love, told us how the Sadducees came to Christ and asked Him if a man had seven wives which one he would have in Heaven; and how He answered them that there were neither men nor women in Heaven, and

that all sexual differences disappeared. Then a burden fell from my heart. If there were neither men nor women in Heaven it could make no difference if Clara saw Rudolf once more. That made me decide. And, as the parson went on talking, I said to God: 'If Thou dost not wish Rudolf to come and see my sister tonight then let her get better. Thou canst do that if Thou dost desire. I shall not go home until this evening, and if at that time she is the least bit better, I will not permit Rudolf to see her. But if she is not better, I will let him see her. Oh, merciful God, Thou canst always stop me if Thou dost not desire it to happen. Thou canst let a stone fall on me or have me murdered. I will be glad to stake my life in the game in spite of my youth. And if all this does not happen then it is a proof that Thou didst not wish it otherwise, for Thou art omnipotent.'

"I wandered out in the snow-covered fields the whole afternoon. I went

into the woods also, and when I came to their trysting place I was really afraid that some one would rush from out of the bushes and make an end of me. When it struck six o'clock in the village, I returned home. Clara was in bed complaining about the beating of her heart. She told me that she had had another visit from the grisly suitor, and there had been a terrible struggle. When he was leaving he had said that tonight was their wedding night, and she said: 'Yes it is Rudolf's and my wedding night; yes, Rudolf's, but not yours.'

"At seven o'clock my father went to the inn, and the nurse left at eight. Then I crept down the stairs and opened the door to let him in. As I was walking up the stairs behind him, I did not notice anything out of the ordinary. But when I opened the door and let him in, I saw how at every step nearer the bed his legs grew weaker so that he had to drag himself to where Clara lay. I softly closed the door and

then went down to the kitchen where only a lamp was burning. Then I knelt down on the hearth and prayed to God that He might not hold it against Clara on account of what she was now doing; He should not punish her as the doctor had said, but should rather make me suffer for it; I would be glad to undergo anything at all if Clara were only permitted to live if she did wrong.

"I heard the clock strike nine. Right after that it struck ten. The time went as if it had only been a minute. At half past ten I went up stairs with my lamp. I knocked softly at the door and told them that it was half past ten. Then a terribly slow quarter of an hour dragged by. I held my breath as I feared I would hear noises in front of the house, but all I could hear was sighs and kisses. Immediately after that Rudolf stepped out, wrapped up in his long cloak, his hat pushed forward on his brow. I lighted the way downstairs. In the hall he

pressed my hand without saying a word. Then I let him out.

"I was very anxious to know how I would find Clara. It was as if a soft sunset were playing over her, and she was as hopeful as I have ever remembered her to be. Not a word did she utter about death. She spoke only of their wedding, of their trip to Italy. Tomorrow she would get up again. Then all at once she began to talk of our childhood days, of our games and how she had sometimes maltreated me. Then she laughed, and I wept for joy.

"She could not become calm, but finally she fell asleep. The next morning when I got up she lay very quiet, and I thought that I would not disturb her. Her head was buried deep in the pillow, so I did not approach her bed but softly tiptoed out of the room. Below I told them that she was sleeping. I was hardly in school when the nurse came running in and brought me back. When I came into the room

my father and the doctor were standing at her bedside. She was dead."

It was deathly quiet in the large hotel. The young husband had listened very sympathetically to his wife's story. Then he told himself that a creature who at the age of fifteen was capable of sympathizing so thoroughly with the life about her would blossom forth even more wonderfully as a mature woman. And he felt himself fortunate in having at his side such a treasure of quiet deliberation, unselfishness, and deep resignation.

I AM BORED.
(1883)

February 9. I am so terribly bored that I have again taken refuge in my diary which I have not kept now for ten months. When Carl and I take Wilhelmine down the hill I wonder what the best way is to have her love me for the winter. She has really become quite charming, with her black eyes, her pretty little head, and her beautiful plump arms, which boast of loving. She has now, for the first time, really budded out, although she is twenty-seven years old.

February 12. Wilhelmine let me know that I should call for her at the skating rink. She says that she is head over heels in love. When I step into her boudoir she presses a photograph into my hands. It is his picture. While I look at him, she stands in front of me, with an album in her hands and recites with hair-raising gestures some of the

verses she has written to him. In the rink, when we are skating hand in hand, she draws the photograph out of her pocket again, gazes at it with loving fondness, and loses one of her skates every ten steps. All the way home she does the same thing. In my room she covers the picture with kisses and slides it in and out of the envelope, so that she can fully appreciate the various and individual traits. All she desires is to be able to travel with him for four weeks. He is a celebrated tenor. For a half-year with him she would gladly sacrifice the rest of her life. I really cannot blame her, for up to the present her life has been pretty monotonous and the future does not look any brighter. While we are playing duets she presses a kiss upon his adored features at every quarter rest. At the end of the etude she is in absolute agony; she sinks into the corner of the sofa, and is resistless to all of my fondling. Only once in a while she

murmurs with dying voice: "Oh, you are so repulsive, so repulsive!"

God bless you, heavenly tenor! I had never pictured such results. I do not seem to be so terribly bored any more.

February 13. Wilhelmine receives me with open arms. She could not have sung her aria if I had not put her in the mood. The Cecilia Choral Society wants to produce the "*Waffenschmied.*" She insists that my lips are too weak, too feminine. Moreover, she insists that love between us is out of the question. And I am really very indifferent about any question. If her mouth were just for speaking, I would sew it together. When there is a question of amusement, I love the serious and the quiet. She has written some verses to me that treat of love. She has not enough control of the language to avoid that word. Then she tells me when and where she learned to kiss. It is a very tedious, sentimental story, all very monotonous, but it

convinces me that she is using her maiden name with full right. Suddenly she asks me where I learned it, but I, so suddenly surprised, clothe myself in the deepest silence, while I am fully ashamed of my teacher, my good old Auntie Helen.

February 16. After dinner I am going to call for Wilhelmine. She says that from today all must be over between us. I told her then that nothing had begun as yet, and asked her whether she was impatient, remarking, at the same time, that I was in no hurry at all. She wrote no less than six poems, all of which vary her decision. Then she gets her revolver, presses me into the corner of the sofa, props my chin up against her breast, and with drawn revolver reads me her verses. Trembling in all of my parts I beg her to stop. Suddenly she throws a white scarf over my head, falls on my neck and kisses me through the soft silk, then flying into a terrible fury, she throws her slipper in my face. Then

she entreats me to write some verses to her. I write three short stanzas in which I rhyme *Brodem** with *Sodom,* and she feels deeply insulted.

In the evening, on the window seat in the upper room, she declares that she wanted to have just a taste of love and that she was then caught in the stream for good. But she wants to stop before the time comes to lay her aside. Then she asks me to be absolutely honest. I ask her whether she knows what the most terrible thing in life is. She answers: "Desire without satisfaction." I shake my head and whisper into her ear: "Tedium!" She sympathizes deeply with me.

At supper the question comes up as to whether the road to the heart is by way of the lips, or whether the road to the lips leads through the heart. Opinions are divided and the discussion waxes warm. My mother defends the road through the heart; Wilhelmine

*Brodem means brothel, but in German its rhyme is almost perfect.

sincerely feels that the road goes by way of the lips. Carl, who has for the past week been splitting wood from morning to night, in order to calm his nerves, thinks that the road to the heart passes not through the lips, but through the ears; and that the road over the lips leads to the stomach, rather than to the heart. Wilhemine wants to give my poems to the victor, but as the manuscript is hidden in her breast she does not. My mother reminds her that we are among the family, but Wilhelmine says that the manuscript has slipped down too far. At these words Carl lowers his eyes, blushing.

After supper Carl and I light a roaring log fire in the fireplace. Then we get the trunk with the Turkish costumes out of the cellar. As we carry it back through the yard the sparks come flying out of the chimney and then are lost among the stars. Carl thinks that if the roof should catch fire we would be in a terrible fix for there is no water to be had now

that the hydrant is frozen. I calm him; what great difference would it make if the whole castle should go up in flames!

We all put on the Turkish costumes. My mother wears a long, richly embroidered velvet coat. She dances in it with incomparable spirit and grace. Wilhelmine, Carl, the two little ones, and I sit around on sofa cushions and drink coffee. Carl plays the accordion and I accompany him on the guitar. Then Gretchen and Elsa dance a *Pas de Deux* which my mother has taught them. Then she tells us of her stage experiences in San Francisco, in Valparaiso, of the life on the *haciendas*, and of her first husband, who at the end of every one of her concerts had already gambled away all the money she had earned. He was to be shot not less than three times in his life: Once during the insurrection in Venezuela, once during the Commune, and finally during the Turco-Russian war. At the present time he is officiating as

master of ceremonies at the Palais de Glace in Paris. Suddenly Gretchen, with her keen gaze, discovers that I have a blood red spot on my neck; I can hardly keep from laughing. As I accompany Wilhelmine down the hill, in order to console her I tell her that she is not the only one but rather a representative; that that is the interesting part for me; to consider her first as a type and then as an individual. I tell her that people so often think that they are "different," just like men who are suffering from imaginary illnesses. Were they to consider that that happens to almost every one, their sickness would be cured.

February 17. I go to see Wilhelmine between two and three o'clock. Her sister is at home. When she finally leaves for her women's society we both watch her gratefully from the window. There are people whom we would rather see from the back than from the front. I explain to Wilhelmine that that is the basis of Greek love.

She does not understand how a person of my temperament can even think of such things. Then we talk about high hats. When I want to calm her I always speak about high hats. In fact I was to marry her in a slouch hat, and be divorced in a high hat. On leaving her, she entreats me, if I have a spark of feeling for her, to write some poetry to her before tomorrow. We are to go to Aarau together and I am to read my verses to her in the train. Gretchen comes for her music lesson. Wilhelmine pushes me quietly into the next room, and she has such a tight hold on my throat that I become red and blue in the face; then with the motherly quiet of a madonna, she turns back into the music room, while I creep out of the house on tip-toe.

After supper I look through all of my poems but find nothing suitable. Then I stretch out on the divan; however I cannot concentrate my thoughts, and I fall asleep.

February 18. The important day! After dinner I put a few sheets of paper in my pocket, hoping that on the way down the hill some sort of an idea will strike me. Wilhelmine rushes towards me at the station asking me for my poem. I tell her that I cannot read it to her here, and I take her to an empty bench in the park close by. There I hand her the folded papers which she opens with pride and happiness. When she finds that the pages are blank, I tell her that I must have left the poem at home by mistake. She gives me a savage slap, her eyes sparkling with anger. Thank heavens, right after that the train leaves. In the coupe I kiss her hand uninterruptedly and assure her of my honest love for her. In Aarau, while we are drinking our beer at the inn, I succeed in fully calming her. On the way back we sit in the car directly behind the engine, and our coupe lies over the wheels. At the very first curve we are tossed about, and I hold her in my arms just

as three years ago, on the very same stretch and perhaps in the same coupé, I held the little, red-haired Delia. It was during my last year at the high school in Aarau; and every morning and evening Delia and I rode back and forth. Now she is a teacher somewhere and teaches little girls to be modest and virtuous. The difference is quite notable. There, blissful sacrifice; here, still uneasy bashfulness. But both here and there the same foolish side remarks.

In spite of the flickering light I can see the down on Wilhelmine's cheeks, and some scattered freckles, and two wrinkles at the eyes; as if everything were under a microscope, five hundred times enlarged. And I ask myself if the most delicate *teint* can stand such close scrutiny. I do not try to converse any more, for I see that she is satisfied with herself, and I bring her home in absolute silence.

February 19. Wilhelmine comes to dinner; but immediately after, she lies

down on my divan and falls asleep. When she awakens she tells me that in some ways she is too old for me, and then again she is too young for me; I should really have two women, one sixteen years old, the other forty-six. Then she asks me to go to her sister, and tell her that she cannot come to her tomorrow as she has to give the town clerk's daughter a music lesson. I go there and Elisabeth opens the door for me. That suffices to make me the perfect swain for the rest of the evening. Elisabeth is fifteen years old, and a bit plump, as girls at this age usually are. Her hands and feet are not small, yet she walks with a comfortable, deliberate gait. Her features are full and glowing, even though they are timid; and dark circles shadow her large, blue eyes. Her glance confuses me and I am sorry that I did not address a kindly word to her. Her mother receives me in the parlor. It makes a rather queer impression upon me to find this house, which I have

not visited since its completion, fully occupied. The younger brothers are racing about, running after the departing ash cart. The mother tells me with pride and delight about her husband. The old man comes in; he still pinches her arm as a sign of greeting. On my way home I have the most vivid dreams of marrying the little creature, of taking her out into the world on trips and adventures. I dream of the honorable president of the court as my father-in-law, of Elisabeth as wife, as mother, and as a matron sitting at my side with our children and grandchildren about us.

March 1. There is a light snowfall, and I take Wilhelmine out into the woods where she believes she is following in the footsteps of her father, who has gone hunting. The festive quiet, the peace of the dead nature about us act as an incentive for unending love discourses. If I were a painter I would marry her today. For a writer marriage with her would spell ruin. She yearns

to really love once more; but not now, not now, perhaps later. Then she asserts that even if I wanted to have her love me now she would not agree. Whereupon I begin to bully her. A half-hour only, just as far as from here to her house, and I could make her fall madly in love with me. She sobs in her handkerchief. I tell her that all I need is to give idealism free rein; it would work unfailingly on her especially as she knew me only as an idler. She entreats me to take her home. Very much strengthened I return. At home all is very quiet. I go to bed early and long to be in Paris.

March 9. Wilhelmine preaches morality. She feels that she has been the loser; she does not agree with herself; now and then she tells herself that it is wrong. She jumps up happily and asks me to tell her truthfully what she is to me. But why does she want to know? I tell her that I could lie about it. Her head falls: that is just the sad part; that is how I hold the

whip hand. I ask her why she started so suddenly; why she asked anyway? She says that she would feel freer if she knew for certain. I say, very well, she is a diversion for me. She looks beyond me: For her I am a convenient plaything. Perhaps, too, a sort of mine, an encyclopedia? She tells me that I have used her simply as I would vivisect a rabbit. But why all this? She feels freer. I ask her if she does not perhaps feel that I have a deeper feeling for her? Oh, no, never! She has only asked me for her own satisfaction. Then there is a farewell with great affection. Under the bridge I meet little Elisabeth. She greets me with a nod that makes me feel better all over. I acknowledge her greeting as respectfully as I can. I do not dare to smile. I fear the sharp gaze of innocence. She has wonderful lips and dark blue eyes. At home, up on the sconce, in the beautiful spring air, I spend an hour in the best of humors. The thrushes have begun their singing. In

the Black Forest and on the Jura mountains the fires have been lighted. A tedious evening at home!

March 20. After I have breakfasted, for the first time again in two weeks I go to the gymnastic exercises in the girls' school. The second class can boast of only one pretty girl. Her face is very fine; her complexion is like milk, and she has black eyes and a delicate nose. Beyond suspicion of cunningness she has very little expression. Her foot is good but she holds herself badly. In the third and fourth classes, which are doing their exercises together, there is only one worth noticing, but that one is a masterpiece. It is my Elisabeth. She stands very near us. A well filled out body, a healthy face, fresh, serious, and not stupid. She holds herself beautifully, and there is a certain softness in her motions. There is an exquisite charm in the round dance which one of the girls performs, accompanied by the old

teacher who is playing an old-fashioned minuet.

March 25. Orsina comes up after dinner. She has again written a lot of poems to me. Wilhelmine is very much hurt. I console her by showing that I appreciate her misery. At tea, I am so enervated that I throw a butter plate at Gretchen's head. She weeps and locks herself up in her room. Whereupon I again go to the girls' school, sit down opposite Elisabeth, and use a second chair to lean my elbow upon. With all of this I wear a wry face, partly in order to keep any people from sitting near me, partly so that I can stare at people unabashed. Anyway no one seems to feel the need of sitting near me. The school superintendents move about with incredibly foolish self-importance; they open and close the large blank books, and exert themselves without ever losing their dignity to look after the heating. Elisabeth remains perfectly unconcerned although she must have noticed my

actions. She knows her lessons perfectly. On the whole the questioning is rather repulsive to me, especially the holding up of the hands which is so often accompanied by poisonous glances. I pick up Elisabeth's composition book and happening to have a pencil in my hand, write my feelings down in the margin as notes. Her books are none too clean; the penmanship is peculiar. I read a whole composition about a vacation trip. Then I leave, as I think, with effect; but it really makes no difference to me either way. In the next room I still look at her geometrical designs. They are not any too geometrical. I am already happy over the fact that I can make a fool out of her. The thoughts of marriage have disappeared. The old president of the court for a father-in-law has lost all fascination for me. In the evening I work in my room up in the tower. Then my dear, sweet little cat comes and meows at my door. As I do not open it immediately she starts

scratching. She did the very same thing yesterday. When I let her in she made straight for my large closet which stands against the wall and tried to open it with her paws. I now open the door and she goes right into the lowest compartment, makes herself comfortable on one of my symbolistic manuscripts and purrs. I keep the door ajar so that the light will not shine on her. After awhile she begins to turn and twist. She moves about here and there and licks herself. Then follows a decided stretching of her body. In the meanwhile she snaps at the rolled-up poems on the side, and throws the first out on the floor with her mouth. I hear her eating something and see how she is biting at it. Five times she repeats her action. The accouchement lasts a full hour. After she has thoroughly cleaned her young ones they begin to meow. I get my mandolin and play them one of Brahms' lullabys. Now it is half past three. A damp, fresh wind blows in through the win-

dow. Throughout the castle the doors and shutters are slamming and the rustling of the linden trees sounds like some distant fire.

THE BURNING OF EGLISWYL.

In the canton of Aargau, in the northern part of Switzerland, there are more mountain castles than there are farmyards in all the north of Germany. Every mountain top, every crest is crowned with an old castle, or at least a ruin of one. Within the circumference of a few miles there are the castles Wildegg, Habsburg, Bruneck, Casteln, Wildenstein, Lenzburg, Liebegg, and Hallwyl. My father bought the castles of Lenzburg when I was eight years old. The little town of Lenzburg had, besides this old castle, a less happy place of interest. This was the cantonal prison, modeled after an American type. And thus when the landowners of the surrounding country have any heavy labor to be performed, they hire the convicts, who have become so accustomed to their lot that they almost never try to escape. And among them there are some very dangerous criminals.

In the year 1876 there was a small landslide which blocked one half of the street. In order to drain the place, pipes had to be laid deep under the ground. My father secured a number of convicts to perform the undertaking. A guard accompanied them. Besides, my father was always on hand. As the men were not permitted to smoke, he gave them chewing tobacco. One day, a long, lead pipe was needed from the village. My father took one of the prisoners with him to fetch it. I met them on their return as I was coming from school. The three of us walked slowly up the hillside, my father in the middle.

"How long have you been in prison?" my father asked the convict.

"Seven years."

"And how much longer is your sentence?"

"Eight years."

"How did you get here?"

"Arson."

"You probably had debts, and wanted to get the insurance on your house?"

"I never owned a house, and never had any debts. I was a servant. But —but—." Then he told his story. He was born and committed his crime in Egliswyl. I was not more than twelve years old at the time, but his story made such an impression upon me that today, twenty years afterwards, I can remember it word for word.

"Amrai's Susan," began the prisoner, "there was a girl for you! There was nothing lacking in her. Every man in this world should have had his little fun with her. She was the bailiff's daughter, and the whole week through she was washed and combed, and she wore a white shirt. I was only farmer Suter's hired man and had always been boarded at the expense of the community. I never knew who my parents were. In fact, I knew nothing about men and women; all that I knew was about cattle: why they were on earth and how old they were. And until

Amrai's Susan told me that her father had said that I was nineteen years old and would have to go to the army in two years, I knew nothing about myself. She was drawing water from the pump and I was holding Bethi by the halter because the milk boy had gone into the village. She looked at me so queerly that I turned around because I thought that she was perhaps talking about Bethi. 'You are nineteen years old,' I said to Bethi when I tied her up for the night. And from that moment I had a strange feeling.

"Amrai's Susan was the first. As far back as I can remember I had never dared to look at her squarely. I don't think I could have done it even in a dream. I used to look at her only when her back was turned. And now she made such big eyes. The next evening she told me that I should come to the 'Egli' on the following Sunday. I told her that I had no money but she said that made no difference. So on Sunday I went to the 'Egli' and watched

them dancing from the doorway. Then Amrai's Susan came with her little friend Marianne and they drew me into the hall. First Marianne had to dance with me. At the beginning it was hard; I did not hold her tight, but she was so clever that by the time we had made three turns we were doing as well as any of the others. And then I felt that something strange was going on within me. After a while Amrai's Susan let her partner go and took me, hot as I was, out of Marianne's arms and danced with me until it grew dark. When there was an intermission she gave me a glass of wine to keep me cool. After that I held her so close that her shoulders were bent back and she did not know what to do with her feet. After the dance she took me with her by the hand. Marianne started a fuss because no one was going with her. I took my shoes off in the street and left them at the pump. The bailiff was taking his grog at the 'Egli.' There were two roses painted

on her bed. When I came back to the stable and saw our five cows sleeping in a row, I said to myself, 'It is all the same; man or beast!'

"Every night I climbed in and out of Susan's window. But then there was Veronica, farmer Leser's daughter, a proud creature, and the first girl in the whole village. On Sundays she and her comrades would go up the main street in the village all in a row, so that no carriage could pass them. And when a young fellow would come along, all seven of them would stare at him until he had passed by; and once he was gone they would laugh so that they could be heard way up in the church. Veronica had had a lover now for a year. But Ruodi Weber had been consumptive since the fall. Now he could only dance three dances no matter how much wine he had drunk at the 'Egli.' Then he would rest his elbows on the table and not say a word. Thus when Veronica saw me dance all night with Susan, without resting at all, she begged

Susan to let her have a dance with me. Susan didn't want to but I did, and so I danced with her. Susan ran outside and wept. And Veronica laughed; and I felt how warm she was. She was as solid as if she had been fed for the butcher. If she had been a three year old heifer I'd have given twenty napoleons for her. We went home arm in arm.

"When the clock struck one there was a knock outside her window. 'That's Ruodi Weber,' she said, and got up and went to the window to bid him good night so that he would not get the stable men. Then she told me that I ought not go with Susan any longer, and because I liked her so well I told her that I wouldn't. But the next day I felt as if I ought to go and see Susan anyway. And I went to see her that night and told her everything. Then she said that she was not like Veronica; as far as she was concerned I could go with any one I cared about, excepting one, her little friend Marianne.

And because Susan was so good I said that I would do as she said. But the next day I thought it was mean of Susan to have told me not to go with Marianne.

"But then when our Muni was being shod on account of the ice, Marianne came to the smithy's to say that her father was coming to get a potion for the bailiff's sick horse. Then I asked her whether I might come and see her. Marianne stood there as if rooted to the spot and gazed at the glowing coals; then she went softly up the stairs.

"At the 'Egli' on Sunday, there was a fight between big Veronica and Susan. I danced the whole afternoon with Marianne. And when the dance was over, they made up, and the four of us walked home together. They kept me in the middle for they were afraid that I would run away. And thus we went through the village on the following Sunday, and the boys cursed and swore, and the girls who were with them laughed, but stared at me be-

cause I was walking with the three prettiest girls in the village. Neither Veronica, Susan, nor Marianne looked to the left or right. They talked among themselves, however, and laughed so loud that they could be heard all over the village. The pastor who was coming along at this time pretended to see nothing. He looked at me, however, and I thought he was jealous.

"Marianne loved me so much that she gave me a pipe. I showed it to Susan and she gave me a large fur cap. Then I showed the cap to Veronica and she gave me a silver watch.

"And thus it happened that when the summer came around there was not a girl who danced at the 'Egli,' or one who went to the spinning room with whom I had not spent the night. During the day I worked well and it pleased farmer Suter. Every one wondered at how I had filled out in the last year. My shoulders were so broad that one could have hitched me to a

plow. My arms were well developed too, and I had grown very smart with it all! 'Now he's ready for the recruits,' said farmer Suter, 'and they'll not send him back.'

"It was midsummer. One night when I opened the stable door I found farmer Suter's wife standing there. 'Where are you going, Hans?' 'Is that any of your business?' 'I'll tell farmer Suter!' Then I went back into the stable. Farmer Suter's wife was fifty-three, and her face was all wrinkled. I suddenly turned back and said to her: 'If you tell farmer Suter that I go out at night, I'll tell him that you did it once too.' She never came to the stable again and I went where I pleased.

"Then came haying time, then the harvest, and then the vintage; and it was during vintage time that the good Lord punished me, and made me an incendiary. It was over there, at Castle Wildegg. Because the vine dresser himself came from Egliswyl, he

took all of his help from that village. It was a rich year, the last year that I carried the grapes. The vintage lasted three days. There were seven of us men, and twenty women folks. On the third day, in the evening, the owner of the castle brought a gypsy along with him. He had a fiddle, and we danced on the grass in the castle courtyard. The grooms strung lanterns, and then the maids also came out to dance. There was one — she was the chamber-maid — who came from Suabia. She was slim and short; but her eyes sank into my flesh so that were I to see them today I would recognize them. I had only one dance with her, but when we were leaving I met her coming along singing, arm in arm with the fat cook. I heard that singing all night, as I lay in the stable gazing into the lantern light. The next evening I went to Wildegg again to get a basket that had been forgotten; and then the little maid came down into the lower courtyard with me and gave me her mouth to

kiss. When I left her I felt it here, in my breast; that is where it hurt, and I did not know what the matter was as I had never been ill before.

"The next evening I again went to see her, and I asked her whether I might stay with her until morning, but she said no. Then I wept. For three days I could do no work. Farmer Suter said: 'What's the matter with Hans? He doesn't eat, drink, or work any more.' Then I went down again that night to Wildegg. At every step I felt better. The castle gate was closed and everything was dark. There I sat until morning and did not return to Egliswyl; I hired myself out down in the village. Every evening when it grew dark I went up there, and if I but saw a corner of her apron I felt better. During the week I drove with a load of wood to Lenzburg. There I bought a ring so that I would have something to give her the next time we met. She laughed when I gave it to her, and she offered me her mouth to kiss. Then

she told me that I might come the day after next, when it was dark. And when I was going down the mountain I said to myself: 'Up there lies Egliswyl, and now you are a good man; now you will succeed in life.' Until I again saw Marie — that was her name — I worked as no farm hand ever worked before. And while working I thought: 'When you come back from the army you'll carry every penny to the savings bank until you have enough to buy some land and build a little cottage. Then you'll go up to the castle and ask Marie to marry you. And if she says no, then you'll go to America and never wed. But Marie will not say no; that would not be right, for if she did not want you she ought to tell you so immediately, and not ask you to come and see her again.' Morning and evening I said the same to myself; and I said to the cows: 'You don't understand such things. That is just the difference between man and beast.'

"And now I have pondered over it for seven years, and still I do not know what brought me down there to the prison, making me miss the best years of a man's life. Marie was a flighty little thing, and when we had made love for three weeks down in the lower courtyard, under the cliffs, and in the cold snow, she wanted to go where it was warmer, and I was not sorry. Then she showed me where I could clamber up the rocks to the little room where she slept alone. One night, when it was striking midnight down in the village, I climbed up to her, trembling for fear lest a stone should roll down among the bushes and awaken the castle folks. Marie softly opened and closed her window. Then for an hour not a word was spoken. And when I left her she was the same as when I had come.

"I dashed down over the cliffs. I had no more feeling in my hands or feet; and my throat felt as though the hangman's noose were around it. And I felt it in my chest, in my back, and

in between: as if my insides were being torn out. And I felt poison surging through my veins. At first I wanted to drown myself, but then I thought: 'No! What does she think of me! What does she think of me! She did not cry and she did not laugh. She was as if frozen.' And then I thought of Amrai's Susan, of Veronica, of Marianne. 'It is their fault,' I said to myself, 'it is their fault.' It was not, though, and I knew it, but I said so to myself as I ran hither and thither through the streets of Egliswyl. I've been pretty bad at times during my seven years here, so bad that I have screamed and rolled on the ground until they locked me up in a place where there was neither light nor air. But at such times I used to think back to that night, and then I'd say to myself: 'They can do what they want with you here, for there is no suffering in God's world as great as what you went through on that night, and that, at least, is behind you.' Had some one tied me to a bench and

beaten me at that time I would have thanked him for it. But there was no one. I came down the mountain side. I howled and shrieked like an animal in a slaughter house. And all I could see was flames, which always grew hotter. It was as if I were in a burning house. Wherever I looked hot flames beat into my face. And the ground was so hot, in spite of the snow that had fallen, that I could not stand still on one spot. And thus it drove me on. At first I did not know what to do, but then suddenly I knew. And then I felt better; but I kept on running for I thought that the new day would break before I had done it. I still saw nothing but flames. All the trees were crackling. It was the *biswind*. 'It has come just at the right time,' I thought. 'You must start in that corner where the wind comes from so that it will spread well. The fire hydrant is frozen too,' I thought. 'That is fine, that is fine!' When I came to the village of Egliswyl I crept around

the left side of it, for it was from there that the wind was blowing; and I crept into five houses, right up under the straw roofs. The third house belonged to farmer Leser, and I thought of Veronica and hoped that she would burn up too. Then I set fire to it. Now I ran back. When I came to the woods there was a good blaze, and my heart grew warm in it. I was still in the middle of the woods when the fire bells began ringing in the little town of Lenzburg; and on the Stanfberg, and over in Amriswyl. And then it went bum, bum! That was the fireman on the castle of Lenzburg who had shot off the cannon. When I came out of the woods the heavens in back of me were red, and I could hear the swishing of the fire hose down on the highway. 'They can sprinkle a long while,' I thought, 'without any water'; and I kept on running down towards Wildegg. I clambered up the rocks, I don't know how, and knocked softly at the window. Marie came.

"'Let me in,' I cried. 'Open, Marie!'

"Then she opened the window.

"'Do you know that it's burning?'

" 'What is burning? Where is it burning?'

"'Do you see, over there? The heavens are burning.'

"'Oh, my God!'

"'It is burning! The village is burning! The village of Egliswyl is burning! And I did it! See how it lights up. I set fire to five corners of it, Marie! Look look!'

"But she was still like ice. It did not seem to move her. Her face was white. She dressed hurriedly and awoke the whole castle, and she told them that she knew who had set fire to Egliswyl. Then she pointed to me. It was I, she said. I had wanted to hide in her room, but she despised me too much. Then they brought a straight jacket; I was still standing at the window, enjoying the crimson heavens. They took me down to the court-

yard. Marie was there. She did not laugh — I am sure of that — yet I do not know why she didn't."

We had arrived at the top of the hill by this time, at the place where the landslide had occurred. Over there, but an hour away, lay the castle of Wildegg bathed in the afternoon sunlight. Perhaps my father would have liked to have sent me away during the story, but there had been no excuse for doing so. The convict stretched his bony body and placed the lead pipe on the grass.

Perhaps my father may have thought that I did not understand what the prisoner was talking about. And, in fact, my understanding of it did not come until much, much later. And by that time the prisoner must have been released.

LES HALLES.

September 8. I awaken about four o'clock. The curtains are still drawn and the room is pitch dark. I light the lights and rise slowly. After yesterday's fatigue I feel like a new man; there is a peculiar movement in my joints, my head seems freer, and I am sure that my body is twenty pounds lighter.

When I go out on the street it is sunset. I walk to my little restaurant, buy Maeterlinck's *Princesse Malaine* under the *Odéon*, and read it through at the cafe. Had he given his spirits more flesh, they would probably have lived longer. I dine at the *Palais Royal* and work at home until midnight.

As I come out of the *Brasserie Pont-Neuf* a girl in a long coat passes me; she reminds me of Marie Louise, but it is not she.

I go to Bovy to find out something about Raimonde. The only face I know in the little place is that of Marie Louise. She asks me to buy her a glass of milk and tells me that yesterday, on the terrace of the *Café d'Harcourt*, a girl had poisoned herself with sublimate. She tells me that Raimonde is still in the Quartier, and that she is *dans la purée*. She has forty thousand francs' worth of debts. That fills me with an enormous satisfaction.

I ask her if she still takes morphine. No, she stopped a long while ago. She then opens her coat and shows me that she has got rid of her burden. She had been in the hospital for three weeks on account of her miscarriage; and it was there that she had broken herself of the morphine habit. She really looks much the better for it. She does not rouge any more, sleeps like a child at night, and when she awakens is no more beset by morbid thoughts. She always reads before turning out her lights. Now she is reading *La Faute de l'Abbé*

Mouret. She had never believed that Zola could have written such a pretty book. Before this she had begun *L'Assomoir,* but had found it in bad taste and tedious. She herself could write a thing like that if she only had the time!

In the meanwhile, a girl, to whom six months before I had given a louis-d'or, presses close to me. I have forgotten her name. At that time she was in black; now she is wearing a brand new, light dress, with a blue silk yoke. I had given her one of my fine figured shirts; after that she took up Goncourt's *La Fille Elisa,* which little Germaine had loaned to me, read it all night, and then ran away. She would have liked to have taken the shirt too. But I must have promised a diamond ring instead.

She has a round, pale face, with rather full cheeks, a pretty chin, a fine retrousse nose, well-formed lips, narrow, updrawn eyebrows, and very sympathetic, black eyes.

Since she is very elegantly gowned, let me state that she has won a personal victory. She does not live at the Hotel Voltaire in the Rue de Seine any longer, but in the Rue St. Sulpice, on the first floor.

I ask her whether she will have anything to drink. No, she is not thirsty.

I have never seen such a pretty little room.

It is all furnished in flowered cretonne, and the bed hangings are of the same material.

The girl in the corn-colored dress with the blue yoke fits into the surroundings so beautifully, that in this little room I feel myself away from the world, from sin, extravagance, danger, and duty.

She asks me whether I would care to have a chartreuse; and she takes out a cut glass bottle and fills two glasses.

The chartreuse is the color of liquid gold and runs like mad through the veins. Over our glasses we discuss her "colleagues."

She does not know whether Lulu and Nini still like each other; perhaps they do—why not? Lulu lived in her own room—really nothing but a little hole—just a bit of a room. But she told every one she met that she had an apartment. Lulu was the domineering and intelligent one, while Nini had very little to say and could only associate with the men whom Lulu chose for her. Did I know Lulu?

I answer that I do not, and foolishly add that it is not my fault that I do not.

Then we talk about Raimonde. Yes, there is a woman for you! She had seen me with her on that memorable night at the *Grand Comptoir*. How much one of her kind would cost!

In order to atone for my former slip, I say fifteen francs.

Pas plus que ca?

No, and she had to beg for that.

Whether I like Raimonde?

I earnestly shake my head, and say, *"C'est une belle femme!"*

While we are talking I see a deck of cards on the table. I ask her whether she can tell fortunes, and she tells me that she will *dire la bonne aventure.* The process takes a good half-hour. We sit down opposite to one another and she tells me many things about my mother and my sisters; about a lot of gold which I am to inherit from a blond man whom I recognize as my publisher.

An hour later she suddenly becomes gay and suggests that we go the *halles* a bit, *un peu vadrouiller.* It was so warm outside and so close here in the room. My entreaties are of no avail. I rise slowly; we dash down one more glass of chartreuse and then we go through the gray dawn over the *Pont-Neuf* toward the *halles.* She wants to have a *soupe au fromage* at the *Grand Comptoir.* There will probably be a lot of people there.

But there is neither music, nor a lot of people. A few lonely grisettes occupy the rear of the place. My companion orders her soup; I call for a

bottle of wine, and we are quite silent. Then the waiter asks: "*Des écrévisses? Une douzaine de Marenes? Un demi poulet?*" She shakes her head three times, and the waiter leaves. That almost moves me to tears. I call him back and ask him to bring two dozen oysters; and while we are eating them, I tell her that we ought to go to Barat's for our coffee.

The lights are out already at Barat's. The musicians who sit opposite us are eating their supper. She asks me how I like the woman there, and I reply that she looks too much like a cocotte. Then she asks me whether I think that she looks like a cocotte. I pay her some compliment, and then she asks me whether I think that Raimonde looks like a cocotte. I reply: "*Mais c'est une belle femme!*" After which she says: "*Tu l'aimes à la folie!*"

I drink four or five cups of coffee and would like more, but it is too expensive here. They charge one franc per portion. So I propose that we go to

the *Chien qui fume.* She has never heard of the place. I tell her that it is close by. And, in the morning glow, we wander through the endless stalls of cauliflowers and beets to the *Chien qui fume.* We climb up the winding staircase to the salon, sit down at the window, and the busy life of the *halles* lies at our feet.

We soon arrive at the conclusion that there is nothing more amusing than to watch other people at work.

In order to appreciate everything fully, instead of ordering coffee again, I tell the waiter to bring us oysters and a good bottle of wine.

We talk about the Duke of Leuchtenberg, about whose eyes my little friend raves; and I describe the magnificent tomb that he has in the *Michaels-Kirche* in Munich. She thinks he was Napoleon's brother-in-law, while I am of the opinion that he was his step-son. Neither of us is sure of our point.

She has recently read a book—she has forgotten the author's name—which

treats of the various mistresses of the French Court, from Diana de Poitiers up to the beautiful Thérèse. So we chat about Mme. DuBarry, Mme. de Maintenon, Mme. de Pompadour, Mme. de Sévignée, Mme. de Staël; about Adéle Courtois, Cora Pearl, Guilia Barucci, Anna Deslions, and finally reach Pope Joan.

Then we talk about culinary delights, about the various restaurants in the Quartier, and those *a l'autre coté de l'Eau.* There is nothing to the little restaurants with *prix fixes.* One gets a long dinner but very little to eat. I bow to her views for I feel the same as she does about it. Like me, she can digest only green vegetables. Excepting asparagus, she likes brussels sprouts best of all. Cauliflower is too insipid. Again I agree with her. We talk about strawberries and about pineapples; and we gradually become one heart and soul. When she leaves me for a moment I tell the waiter to bring a bottle of pommery.

A mild sunshine lies over the *halles*. The people are hurrying about like ants. The high heaps of cauliflowers and beets have already disappeared—perhaps they are already eaten. I feel especially well.

My companion seems to come from a good family. Everything about her seems to point that way. She again takes her seat opposite me and raises her glass to her lips in a manner that could not be emulated in the best society. She comes from Normandie, from Falaise. I know the place well enough. She has also read Maupassant's *Maison Tellier*, but turns the conversation away from it. She tells me that she has a wealthy married sister in Falaise who comes to Paris every winter, but she never sees her. She herself is waiting for some forty thousand francs, which she will get when she comes of age. Probably she will buy new gowns at once, and within three months all will be gone. She does not seem to have the slightest desire to go

back into respectable society. She says that she could never again fit into the life in Falaise, where they retire at eight and rise at seven; where, neither in summer nor winter do they go the cafes, and where they never think of *un peu vadrouiller*. I propose that when she comes into her money she should take me for her special friend. I bring my good qualities to her notice, my happy disposition and my general ease. She laughs and says that I am richer than she. I shake my head and tell her that I have no thirty of forty thousand francs to look forward to. Very well! She will agree if I am willing to go through all I have with her now; all I have to do is to put it on the table.

I look at the clock and think that it has stopped. The waiter tells us that it is half past twelve. We are both terribly surprised. Now we really must have some *déjeuner*.

She wants to fix her hair in front of the mirror but she connot see herself, for it is covered, from top to bottom,

with inscriptions, and there is not even enough room left for a postage stamp. Then she asks for my diamond. I give her my shirt stud, but it does not write, and I tell her that I must have it sharpened again.

On account of the glaring sun we go down through the *halles*, paying special attention to the flower stalls. Roses from the most delicate white to the deepest red lie in profusion on either side. Greedily I inhale the intoxicating odor.

It is nice and cool in the *Grand Comptoir*. The waiter, who remembers having seen us but ten hours before, falls flat on his stomach in awe. We both feel the need of something refreshing so we really eat more from a feeling of duty than anything else. We agree on a *Poulet-Mayonnaise*, a huge portion of salad, a basket of peaches and pears, and a light bottle of white wine. We will have our coffee in the Quartier.

While she is peeling a peach with her beautiful fingers she asks me how she looks, and I, of course, say: "Enchanting." Her moist eyes are still the same, and, what does not surprise me in the least her lips are still that beautiful red.

"You use rouge, don't you?"

"No, that is natural color. My lips are always like this." And she proves it by rubbing them with a damp handkerchief.

We drive back over the *Pont-Neuf* to the Quartier in an open carriage. Paris is resplendent; or is it my state of mind that makes me think so? The sparkling, blue Seine with its innumerable steamboats, its black tugs, and long, white rowboats; the boulevard with its rows of trees, whose last leaves tremble in the autumnal sunshine and among whose branches there still can be seen, here and there, a bright streamer from last year's carnival,—all of this helps to make me happier, and seems to me to have been created for just that purpose.

At the *Café de la Source* my friend suggests *Petits pacquets.* She wins a trifle. After that, she wins five francs; then she stops playing and insists upon payment. I tell her to wait two days; but since she does not consent I candidly confess to her that I have not another sou in my pocket, and that she will have to treat me to a cup of coffee at the *Café Vachette.*

We wander along slowly to the Cafe. The waiter, who sees me daily sitting alone in my solitary corner, asks me with more than customary politeness what I want. I tell him that madame is ordering. Madame feels very much embarassed. With downcast eyes, she stammers: "Two coffees." "With brandy?" the waiter asks me. "That is for madame to say." "With brandy, of course!" madame hastens to add.

We both feel rather bored. After I have finished my cup I ask her to treat me to another. She has a five franc piece in her hand, and when the waiter passes she orders another cup for me.

It is half past three. I have not much more time. We go together to the *Carrefour de l'Odéon,* and there we separate. I follow her with my eyes for a while. As with elastic step, she is turning the corner of St. Sulpice I suddenly remember that I have forgotten to ask her name. I go to my room, draw my curtains, and lie down on the bed, fully dressed.

As I reread these lines one thing comes to my notice: the odd things about diaries is—if they are honest—that they seldom recount any events. As soon as events occur in life, all the joy, interest, and time for diaries is gone, and one regains the spontaneous naiveté of the child, or the beast in its wild surroundings.

THE VICTIM.

"No, please do not ask me how I came here. How can you be interested in it? Tomorrow you'll be laughing at me; I can see it in your face. Why do you want to make me weep? It's much nicer for you when I am gay."

And the beautiful, slim girl from Munich, with her heavy, thick raven-colored hair bent trembling over him and kissed his lips, and his half-closed eyelids, so that he would forget his question. But it did no good. He made a grimace that caused a shudder to pass through her whole body. He rejected her caresses pushing her away from him. Thus he made her helpless, for her beauty was all that she possessed. And he was no creature of mad passions, but a dilettante for whom nature had made nothing too good. He had to add his seasoning to everything that came in his way. While still a youth he had tasted all the

pleasures of life, and now he scorned all that was law to others. And so it did not satisfy him that the young girl was sinning with a light heart for his sake. He had to make her see what she was doing in order to appreciate fully the last soft conscience pain. That was the reason he would not allow her glances or her smiles to lure him from his purpose; he set himself up as an admonisher of penitence and asked her quite frankly whether hunger had driven her to it.

"No, no. I always had enough to eat as far back as I can remember. We had meat three times a week at home."

He had thought that. For whoever saw her could not possibly imagine that she had ever suffered from lack of food.

"But you had nightmares that bothered you? You came here to enjoy your youth?"

"Oh, God, no! Don't ask me more. Do you live here in Zurich, or are you just passing through?"

"Passing through. But your parents are still living?"

"Yes. But they do not know where I am."

"Not even that you are here in Zurich?"

"No. They do not know anything about me."

"What is your name?"

"Martha."

"Martha? Well, well. Yes, there are many Marthas in God's world. I knew already that your name was Martha."

"You only have to say 'Martha' in case you want to write to me. Then you can feel sure that I will receive the letter. All of my friends simply address me as 'Martha.'"

"And your last name?"

"That I'd not tell you even if you had a knife at my throat. I'd rather be killed than mention my father's name."

"How did you come here?"

"I'll tell you another time. Only not today. Please not today."

"I suppose you had a lot of work to do at home? You had to get up early and sweep the stairs?"

"I always enjoyed work."

"Really, is that such a pleasure for you? But here you are certainly more comfortable."

"Oh, why do you say that! I'll tell you what brought me here. I believe you pity me. Other men want to hear nothing but obscenities and as soon as you do not fondle them, they do not want to have anything to do with you. God knows, I have never yet spoken to a living soul about it, although I think of it day and night. My one consolation is that this life cannot last long. Then all is over and forgotten."

"But don't you believe in a future life?"

"There may be one for rich people, but there is none for us. That would be too frightful!"

And again the young girl looked deep into his eyes, because she was not sure whether he was not laughing to himself over her frankness. Then she turned down the light and said:

"I was fourteen years old when my mother put me to work. I had no figure, and my eyes were as large as a calf's. There were four of us apprentices, Resi, Celia, Katy and I. On Monday mornings we would count the days till the following Sunday. On Sunday afternoons we used to visit each other; then we'd have tea and go for a walk in the park. Do you know the Englische Garten in Munich?"

"Yes, yes. Yes I've often gone skating there with my little one."

"That you did not have to tell me now."

"But what did you four talk about?"

"Mostly about our forelady. She was so clever that we all had the highest respect for her. When a lady would come for the first time, she would simply look at her and then cut out a

pattern on her lap. It looked as if she were designing with her scissors."

"And you talked about nothing else?"

"Why? Oh, yes. We used to tell about our home life. Celia had a brother for whom she made clothes. He was still at school. Sometimes she helped him with his lessons. You can't realize how proud she was of him. Now when I am alone I often think that if I only had a child . . . and then my mind always goes back to little Hans. He was so pretty."

"Now don't weep."

"I'm not crying on that account. I am only thinking how much I feared it at first, and now I'd be so happy; then at least I'd have something to live for."

"Yes, but you would only spoil the child."

"Yes, you are right. I'd make a mess of it. And I'd love it with all my heart and soul. It would have a better time than all other children."

"Then you still love him?"

"Oh, yes. You are good. I could tell you everything."

"How did you happen to meet him?"

"It was in midwinter, one evening at nine o'clock. I had been working for two years. By this time I was wearing long skirts, and when I used to walk down the street without my hat, wearing my little apron, the men would smack their lips. I laughed about it because I took it as a compliment. Then, one evening, I was given a dress to deliver to the Baroness Ubra, who lived on the Schwabinger Landstrasse. I wanted to take a street car, but they were all crowded. It was a very stormy and cold night. Every one wore ulsters and furs, but all I had on was my coat with the big buttons and my feather hat that I had to hold to keep on my head. Already in the Theatinerstrasse I was wishing that I had not been born. My hands and feet were numb, and at each step I bumped into somebody else. Then I ran into a street lamp and broke my

umbrella. The wind tore it to shreds. The snow blew into my skirts and flew down my neck. I was wet from top to toe. In front of the Feldherrnhalle, the top of the box flew off and the dress fell onto the snow. I wanted to die on the spot. I picked up the dress and brushed off the snow from the paper with my handkerchief so that the moisture would not go through. Then I was about to take the box under my arm when a gust of wind blew my skirts up all around me. Heavens, I thought, if only no one saw me!

"Immediately after that a gentleman came up to me and asked if he might carry my bundle. I said yes.

"So we two walked out to the Schwabinger Landstrasse, and then he walked back home with me. He had told me that he worked in a store, and that he was supporting his sixty year old mother. I told him where I worked. I had not looked at his face carefully and would never have been able to recognize him again.

"But the next evening as I was coming out of the store, he was at my side, as soon as I had separated from the other girls. As he had been so kind, I could not send him away. And thus it was that every evening he called for me and then walked up to my house door with me, always telling me how good and kind his old mother was. And when the spring came he told me one evening that he loved me. At first I did not believe it. But for an entire month he spoke of nothing else; and then, all of a sudden, he asked me whether I loved him, and I answered yes.

"That was the terrible part; from that day on he was not the same man. Before this he had always been so gentle and kind; now that was all over. He insisted that I did not love him. I told him again and again that I did. And it was true. I thought of him all day long, and used to wonder in what sort of humor he would be in the evening. But he was never the

same any more. His eyes were always on the ground, and often he never spoke a word. Before this he had often kissed me on leaving me. Now he did not even do that any more. I asked him to do so, but he refused. He called me a 'cocotte.' I was so frightened; I did not know what that meant. At first I could not even remember the word. Then I wrote it down and asked Celia what it meant. She said that it was a girl who walked the streets at night.

"My mother asked me why I looked so badly, and why I did not eat or talk any more. But I could not say anything. I had firmly decided not to say anything at home about him until we would be able to announce our engagement; and his income was not yet large enough for that. It meant waiting until his mother died. But once, when he left me standing in the middle of the square, because he was so angry, and then walked away with his hands in his pockets, I rushed after

him and threw my arms around his neck; and he must have seen that I loved him. I begged him to be as he used to; I had done nothing to hurt him; he should not torture me so terribly. Then he murmured: 'Prove to me that you love me.' I asked him how I could prove it, and he answered that I certainly must know, I was no child any more. Then he told me that I was a coquette and that I was playing with him; but he had enough of it, and was not going to be made a fool of any longer.

"I could not sleep that whole night, and I kept wondering what he meant, and why I had shown myself ungrateful. Finally, I decided to question Celia, as he would not tell me himself. But I did not want to tell Celia the whole story. No one had noticed my going with him, and thus I wanted it to be, until we could announce our engagement. He used to tell me about his mother's ill health; then she would be better again.

"After dinner, as I was walking arm in arm with Celia, I asked her if she had ever been in love. She pondered a moment, and then said yes. I then asked her what she had done, and she told me that she had taken a hot foot bath. Then all was put to rights, she said. No, she had done nothing more. I should have liked to know more, but she laughed and told me that the rest was strictly private.

"That evening I told him that I knew all; I had asked Celia and he should wait until the next day. 'Then tomorrow,' he said, and kissed me. He was sweeter than he had been for weeks. That whole evening I was in a tremble. I prayed that my mother would not notice that I was going to take a foot bath. I was terribly frightened. After they were all asleep, I crept down to the kitchen in my nightgown. I had left the fire burning in the stove. I put on the kettle to boil, and then I had sensations that I had never felt before. You may not believe

it, but I trembled for joy, and wondered what he would think when he saw me so changed. I crept into bed, and slept as I have never slept before. The next evening I was in a terrible state. First we fell into each other's arms and kissed. I was so happy I could have wept. Then he told me to come with him, but I told him that he knew I had to go home. Then he called me a silly, stubborn creature.

"On Sunday I went to the fortune teller. I did not want to tell her any more of my love than I did Celia, but in five minutes she had the whole story out of me. Then she told me that I should go with him and deny him nothing, for if I did he would realize how much I loved him. I asked her how much I owed her, and she wanted to know how much money I had with me. I told her three dollars and ten cents. She said that although her usual fee was five dollars she would be satisfied because it was I. Finally, she asked me to come and see her again.

"The next evening I went to bed with all my clothes on. I had removed only my shoes. As it struck eleven I tiptoed down the stairs. He embraced me and took me to his room. An hour later, he brought me back; but I could not imagine why he was so happy. I thought that there must be something very strange about love to make a man so happy at the knowledge that he was loved by a girl.

"Then I became his mistress. Already in the first week he said: 'If you really love me, you'll not live at home any longer. If the butcher's boys should find me at your door they'd kill me.' I took my clothes along that night, and the next day I said I had a headache, and went to look for a room with a bed and two chairs. That evening I did not return home. My father came to me on Sunday. He asked me if I was still working in the store. I said that I was. Then he asked me the name of my lover. I replied, 'That I'll not

tell you; you can beat me as much as as you want to, but I'll not tell you.' Then he threatened to get the police. I told him that I was not afraid of the police, or of the entire world. Then he fell on my bed and sobbed as if his heart would break. Then he got up, looked me square in the face, gave me a terrible slap, and left my room. I never saw him again.

"My lover now came to see me every evening. His mother, he said, was very ill, and that was why he had given up his apartment. He needed the money for medical purposes. Sometimes, when he did not have enough, I gave him a few of my savings, but I never had much left over as I always had to pay for supper for two people. At first he was going to introduce me to his mother; but now it was too late, she was too ill. He was afraid that the pleasure and the excitement would kill her on the spot.

"Once in the shop, when the forelady was gone, Resi and Celia began to

speak about a girl who had had a child. I asked whether she was not married. They said she was not. Then a terrible fear seized me. I became quite ill and had to go home. I wept the whole day. Never in my life had I thought that one could have children without being married. When I told him, he called me a silly child, and told me that he was not in the least afraid. But from that day on I never had a moment of quiet.

"And then he was sent here to Zurich on business. As we were sitting in the train a young girl entered. At first she sat in the opposite corner, but when she saw my lover she threw him a glance that made me shudder, and then she sat opposite to him. She said that she was engaged as a waitress. She was laced so tightly that I did not see how she could breathe. And she could not keep her feet still, and she kept fanning herself with a handkerchief that smelled like a menagerie. She exchanged looks with my lover that

seemed to imply the most heavenly things, but I did not understand them. Once in a while she would look at me; but then I was ashamed to death. I had on a terribly faded dress, a gray shawl over my head, and I kept my feet curled up beneath me as there were big holes in my shoes. She wore brand new russet shoes with gilded buttons. Her dress was so tight that one could see the outlines of her knees. On her lap she had a box of candy and a bottle of plum brandy. She offered me some of it. I did not want to take any but my lover told me not to be bashful. Just before we reached Lindau, the engine came to a sudden stop, and she almost fell into his arms.

"As soon as the second day he went out with her to the concert hall in the evening and did not return the whole night. In the morning I set out to look for him, and when I returned his belongings were gone. Then I looked for him all over the city. I pictured him standing at every street corner.

Finally I found him on a bench on the quai. I asked him to come back with me. He told me that he would not; that here in Zurich the police forbid a man and woman to live together. We would be sent to prison if we were caught. But he promised to come and see me as often as he could.

"During the first two weeks he only came three times. I had found work in a store and sat at home all day and did sewing. On his third visit I asked him where he was living, but he would not tell me. And so often I would go out on the streets looking for him because I had firmly made up my mind not to return to my room without him.

"One evening about eleven o'clock, I caught him just as he was coming out of a fine restaurant. I asked him point-blank, 'You are living with that waitress?' Then I asked him whether he did not love me any longer. He replied, 'How can I love you as long as I do not come to see you any more?' At first I did not understand him.

'What did you say?' I asked him. And then he repeated, 'How can I love you as long as I do not come to see you any more?'

"It seemed to grow green and blue before my eyes. I held my hands up to my face and ran away. I had to think over what he had said. What did he understand about love since he thought that as long as we were not living together he had to cease to love me? I knew that I had loved him in spite of it. I loved him, and love him still; I could have worked for him my whole life; and he could not love me any more because he did not come to see me. I was not a silly girl any longer. I also felt that there was something very sweet in being together. And then I began to think that that was all he had wanted from the beginning. Then I ran down to the lake and wanted to drown myself. But that was not enough for me. It hurt me that the water seemed so sweet and pleasant. I ran through the streets and wished

that somebody would come along and maltreat me so badly that I would lose my mind. I felt that if some one would kick me my pain would be lessened. I felt that I had to let myself be debased as low as possible, and then perhaps I would not feel the pains in my heart so much.

"I pondered a long while. A gentleman came along and smoothed my hair. I would have gone with him but he was too kind, too decent. He wore kid gloves and seemed to be some one who wanted to save me. No, no; I had to go lower, lower, where one can neither see nor hear. I whispered to myself that I had to become so miserable that I could feel nothing more.

"My lover had told me that in Zurich there were women who took young girls into their houses and then sold them. I asked a policeman at the corner where I could find such a woman. He asked me if I had ever been in one of those houses before, and I told him I had. Then he took me by the arm and took me to the station house. A

red-faced man, with a black moustache and blue glasses also asked me whether I had ever been in that kind of a house before. And I again said that I had. Then he asked me where that had been, and I pointed to some indefinite direction. I told him that I was a total stranger, that I had today for the first time gone out and that I could not find my way back. Then he told two policemen to bring me to this place. And here I am. . . ."

"But the life here is very nice, isn't it?"

"At first the lady of the house was dissatisfied with me because I was always so sad. But since she sees that our most repulsive customers always pick me out and that I never refuse any of them, she likes me just as well as young Miss Palmyra, that very jolly girl."

It was Sunday morning when the young man found himself out in the open again. The church bells were ringing; men, women, and children were

coming out of church. The young man would have liked to make some witticism about it but he did not feel very well. He had never appeared so small to himself; but neither had he ever appeared so good to himself. He did not recognize this new state of mind. He compared the care free, sunny mood of the churchgoers, who had just listened to their minister and who were looking forward to their Sunday dinner, with the serious tone of his own soul and he decided, without a spark of frivolity, that he did not envy them. That evening he had taken off the mask of the admonisher of penitence. He had learned to believe in innocence where he least expected to find it. He despised himself when his thoughts went back to the girl. She had never wanted to do wrong and had drawn the unlucky number in life's lottery. He had never wanted to do anything good in this world, still he felt that he was not quite lost yet. The impression remained with him to the end of his days.

THE INOCULATION.

When I tell you this story, my friends, I do not do so to show the slyness of women nor the stupidity of men; I tell it rather on account of certain psychological curiosities contained in it which will interest you, and which, if known, can be of great advantage to you during life. But before proceeding, allow me to protest against the reproach that I am crowing over my early misconduct which I so thoroughly repent, and which, now that my hair has turned gray and my knees weak, is of no fascination to me.

"You have nothing to fear, my dear, sweet boy," said Fanny one evening, just as her husband was coming home, "because married men are jealous only when they have no cause for it. And from the very moment that there is a cause for jealousy they are as struck blind."

"But I don't like his expression," I murmured. "It seems to me that he has noticed something."

"You misunderstand that expression," she said. "That expression is only the result of the means I have used in order to prevent any possible jealousy from ever arising in him, and to stop any suspicious thoughts about you."

"What is this means?" I asked, astonished.

"It is a sort of inoculation. On the very day that I took you for my lover I told him quite frankly that I loved you. Since then I repeat it to him twice daily, on arising and on retiring. 'You have every reason,' I say to him, 'to be jealous of that dear boy; I truly love him, and it is neither your nor my merit that I remain faithful to you, but it is through him that I am still as virtuous as I am.'"

In that very moment it became clear to me why her husband, when he did not think that I was looking, would

gaze at me in a sympathetically scornful way.

"And do you really think," I asked, "that this means is lasting?"

"Unfailing!" she replied with perfect surety.

In spite of it, however, I greatly doubted that safety of her psychological calculations until one day the following event forced me to change my mind.

I was at that time living in the heart of the city, in a small furnished room on the fourth floor of a large apartment house. I was accustomed to sleep late into the morning. One sunny day, at about nine o'clock, the door opened and she entered. I should never have told what followed if it had not shown one of the most surprising and still credible cases of blindness that are conceivable in mankind. Hardly had the sheets covered us both, when we heard steps in front of the door. There was a knock, and I had hardly time enough to pull the sheet over her head, when her husband, puffing and

perspiring after having walked up the one hundred twenty steps to my room, came into the room, his face all aglow with happiness.

"I came to ask you whether you wanted to take a little trip with Roeder, Schletter and myself. We are going to take the train as far as Ebenhausen, and from there we are going to bicycle to Ammerland. I really had work to do at home today, but my wife left early this morning to find out how the Bruechmann's youngest child is, and the weather was so glorious that I could not stay at home. I met Roeder and Schletter at the Cafe Luitpold and we made up the party. Our train leaves at 10.57."

During the time that he was speaking I had a chance to collect my thoughts. "You see that I am not alone," I remarked, smiling.

"Yes, I see," he replied with that understanding smile. Then his eyes began to sparkle. Hesitatingly he took a step forward and now stood close to

the chair on which I always placed my clothes. On the top of the chair lay a fine batiste, armless chemise, with a name embroidered on it; across that lay a pair of open-worked, silk stockings. Since there was no other part of a feminine wardrobe apparent, his gaze fell on that with unmistakable longing.

That moment was the deciding one. One second more and he must remember that he had seen this apparel somewhere before in his life. Let it cost what it might, I had to detract his attention from the incriminating evidence. The train of thought which flew through my mind caused me to perpetrate an outrage which, in spite of the fact that it saved the situation, causes me as much shame now as it did twenty years ago.

"I am not alone," I repeated. "And, if you had the slightest idea of the magnificence of this creature you would envy me." With that I pressed my arm on that part of the sheet where I thought her mouth was, in order to

stop any sort of a sound that she might utter.

His greedy eyes traveled up and down the perfect outline.

And now comes the terrible, the unheard of. I grasped the bottom of the sheet and pulled it right up to her throat, so that only her head was covered. "Have you ever in all of your life seen anything so magnificent?" I asked him.

His eyes stood wide open, but he was very much confused.

"Yes, yes, — I must say — you have good taste — well, I — I'll go now — please excuse my — disturbance."

With that, he drew back to the door and I slowly, very slowly, lowered the veil. But then I jumped up as quick as a flash and stood with him at the door, but I was so placed that he could not possibly see the chair on which the clothes lay.

"I'll probably take the noon train to Ebenhausen," I said, as he stood there, his hand on the door knob.

"Perhaps you'll wait for me there at the Gasthof zur Post. Then we can ride together to Ammerland. That will be a lovely trip. And thank you so much for your invitation."

He made a few, well-meaning remarks and then left. I remained rooted to the spot until I heard him leave the house.

I will spare you a description of the terrible fury into which the deplorable woman flew after this scene. She was like a maniac, and swore such implacable hatred against me as I have never in all my life heard. And while she was hurrying into her clothes she even threatened to spit in my face.

"Where do you think of going now?"

"I don't know — I'll drown myself — or go home — or to the Bruechmann's — to see how their youngest is getting along — I don't know!"

At about two o'clock Roeder, Schletter, my friend and I were sitting under the shady chestnut tree at the Gasthof zur Post in Ebenhausen and

were relishing our chicken and salad. My friend, whom I had been watching very closely, gave me every reason to feel absolutely safe, as he was in unusual, good humor. Every once in a while he would throw an amusing glance at me, and then would relishingly rub his hands together, without, however, betraying the cause of his jolliness. The excursion went off quietly and at ten o'clock we were back again in the city. At the station, we decided it was too early to go home, so we thought we would go to a cafe.

"I am going home to get my wife," my friend said. "She has been at the bedside of a sick child all day, and would be provoked if I let her stay at home alone the entire evening."

A little later he brought her back with him. The conversation, of course, centered around the excursion, the eventlessness of which made us all try our utmost to make some interesting story of it. The young woman spoke very little and ignored me altogether. He,

on the contrary, even more than in the afternoon, wore that puzzling look of conquest. His triumphant glances were, however, more for his wife than for me. It was as if he had experienced some deep-rooted satisfaction.

It was not until a month later, when I was alone with her for the first time again, that the riddle was solved for me. After I had once more to stand some very severe reproaches, there was a sort of reconciliation, after which, she told me how her husband, on that eventful day, had told her the following story:

"Now I really have come to know what sort of a man your 'dear, sweet boy' is, my child. Every day you tell me how you love him, and you have no idea how he is laughing at you behind your back. This morning I went to his room; of course, he was not alone. And now I also see why he bothers so little about you and why he spurns your feelings. For his mistress is a woman of such wonderful

bodily perfection that you could never even hope to compete with her."

That, my friends, was the way in which the inoculation worked. I have only told you about it so that you may guard your lives against it.

"Moses, Moses, I do not like your actions. Why do you want to become engaged at twenty when you do not wish to wed until you are twenty-five?" Old Esra gazed at his son with half-closed eyes, as if he wanted to decipher an indelible cabalistic cipher in his son's head.

"I love Rebecca."

"You love Rebecca? How do you know that you love Rebecca? I will believe that you love a small foot, white skin, and a smooth face; but how do you know that it is Rebecca? You have studied Roman law, you have studied Civil law, but you have not studied women. Have I brought you up with care for twenty years only to have you begin your life with a folly? How many women have you known, Moses, that you can come to your old father and tell him that you are in love?"

"I know but one, and I love her from the bottom of my heart."

"What do you mean by the bottom of your heart? Have you learned to know your whole heart?"

"I entreat you, father, not to make light of my feelings."

"Moses, Moses, now do not be hot headed. I tell you, do not be hot headed. Let me tell you a story. Come over here and sit next to me on the divan. Let me tell you what my father told me when I was twenty years old."

"'Esra,' he said to me, 'when you marry, marry a rich girl. Believe your father when he tells you that woman is not lasting. But a sound taler will last through generations!'"

"And when I thought it over that he was an old man I promised him that my wife would have a dowry of thirty thousand talers. But I want to explain to you, Moses, why I loved little Leah, why I married her, why I lived in sadness with her until she was taken

from me like snow melts in the hand. It was because I did not know women, Esra; because I did not know myself.

"Moses, I am an old man and I want nothing more from the world except your happiness. When I was twenty years old my soul was like a barnyard before sunrise. When I walked on the street and a Gentile girl or a Jewish girl passed me, I could feel her presence in my finger tips, and I wished that I had been King Solomon with five thousand wives. But she had to be made as if the Lord had made her for Himself; she had to possess every possible feminine charm. If she was small, thin, pale, and quick as a rat I lowered my umbrella towards her, for it hurt my eyes to behold her. But if she was like the cedars on Lebanon, then I lowered my umbrella towards the other side; and I took her picture home with me and saw it while I was reading the Talmud; and I could hear the patter of her feet in the holy words. And the picture appeared to me in the night

— and I had it before me as Moses had the image of the Lord before him in the Holy Land.

"But then I said to myself — Moses, can you imagine what I said to myself? 'You are a child of the devil, and you have been so since your birth. If you give in to your desires, and if you want to cross the river Jordan, then you will become a child of death. You should not go with women who appeal to your senses, but you should go with women who appeal to your heart, unless you want your flesh to become like the flesh of Job; unless you want your actions to be cursed; unless you want to eat grass like Nebuchadnezzar.'

"And then I went to old Hezekiel and asked him to give me his daughter Leah; and I promised him that I would do all that I could to make her happy. Leah was like the shadow on the windowpane, but I loved her because I thought that she would save me from myself, from the devil, and from death, which I felt day and night hovering

over my head. At first she would have none of me, for I was big and broad, while she was small and thin; and she was ashamed to walk on the street with me. But as no one else came to ask for her hand she took me.

"Now, Moses, let your father tell you how our human understanding is hemmed in, and how vain is all our discernment. I had not as yet tasted the sweetness of love; I was as chaste as the dew on Hebron, just as you are, Moses; although you have studied Roman law and Civil law and have neglected Moses and the prophets. But when I tasted of the sweetness of love with Leah I realized that it was a sin before God, and I thanked the Lord that He had not let me go the road of the godless. I had dreamed during my lonely nights that this love would act on the body like a balm, but behold, it was like medicine to Leah and me. And we took it as medicine, with eyes closed and choking throats, as if it had been prescribed by a physician. And when

we had tasted it we felt as if we had been judged by the Lord and cursed, and we avoided each other like thieves in the night, having met at their devilish work. Then I said to myself: 'You were right, Esra, bodily love is like serving the devil, and is not worthy of mankind.' And believe your old father, Moses, I was not happy.

"I was not happy, Moses, my son, and the Lord is my witness; for I could not converse any more with Leah than if she had been an inanimate thing. Her thoughts were not my thoughts, for my thoughts were my own, and she had none. Then I turned to solitude, and I found solace in it. And I said to myself: 'Esra,' I said, 'you have bought a cat in the bag, and on your head lies the responsibility. You could have tested her, and found out whether her soul was mated to yours, whether her heart was the companion of yours. Do not let her notice, Esra, that you have bought a cat in the bag, for she is as

innocent as a lamb. And why were you not as careful in picking out a wife as you are when you buy an expensive scarf?'

"And thus I lived and suffered with her for two long years, and loved her all the while, for she kept me away from the temptation of the flesh until she had borne me a little boy; but there was not room for him and the Lord took both him and my Leah away from me.

"Moses, I then felt as if my entrails had been burnt out with a hot iron, as if the earth had been razed to the ground, as if I had been left alone in the world to suffer the curse. And I became incensed with Jehovah, and I cried: 'Cursed be Thy name! Why didst Thou take unto Thyself the woman I had chosen for myself! Art Thou cursed with stupidity that Thou crushest Thy child and sparest Thy enemy! Canst Thou not take unto Thyself the rich man's lamb! Must Thou deprive the poor man of his all! Cursed be Thy

name! Doest Thou want to thrust me in the way of temptation, and cast me out into sin; doest Thou want me to go among the godless again, after I have with care and pain hidden my soul from Thy anger? Cursed be Thy name! Cursed be Thy name! On Thy head my curse!'

"And then, in order to find solace, I went to the sisters of sorrow. Yes Moses, I went to the sisters of sorrow. I am not telling you, Moses, to visit the sisters of sorrows. You can do as you please. But I, your father Esra, went to the sisters of sorrow. And as I went I cursed Jehovah. I cried to Him: 'It is Thy fault that I am going to find solace among the sisters of sorrow. Why didst Thou take my Leah from me!'

"And now, Moses, open your ears wide so that you will understand me. I tasted of the pleasures of Gentile maids, of Jewish maids, of the daughters of Ham. I did not choose those who appealed to my heart, but those who

appealed to my senses, for I wanted to forget my sorrow, for I wanted to forget my Leah. And I chose those who were like the cedars on Lebanon. And I found that the more a girl appealed to my senses the easier it was for me to hold converse with her, and the easier it was for her to hold converse with me; and the more she appealed to my senses the friendlier she was, and the more she appeased my aching heart. And I found, Moses, that the more she appealed to my senses the easier it was for me to endure my sin; and I found myself closer to the Almighty. And if you were to offer me a half a million, Moses, I would not exchange it for that knowledge; for that knowledge bears interest at twenty per cent, at thirty per cent, at one hundred per cent; and the interest is children and children's children. One can be unhappy with a half a million, but one cannot be unhappy with the knowledge that the love of the flesh is not like serving the devil when man

goes the path marked out for him by the Lord who created two people for each other who are alike physically and spiritually.

"And I beat my breast and cried: 'Lord, I have heard Thy secret counsel. Thou confusest the wiseman in his cunning, and makest him to walk and grope about at midday as in the darkness of the night!' And then I went and searched for a wife with the use of all my senses; and I found Sarah, beautiful as the newborn earth, and she became your mother. I tested her heart, and I found that her heart was the brother of my heart. And on our wedding night, Moses, the night to which you thank your existence, I found that her body was the mate of my body; and I praised the Lord, Whose spirit does not lie, Whose truth is visible in His work."

Rabbi Esra wiped his brow and breathed deeply. Moses, his head lowered, crept away.